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America's stake in that 'crazy' Gulf war

RICHARD HOWARD ON ALFRED KAZIN • WILLIAM HYLAND ON AMERICA'S SOVIET MYOPIA

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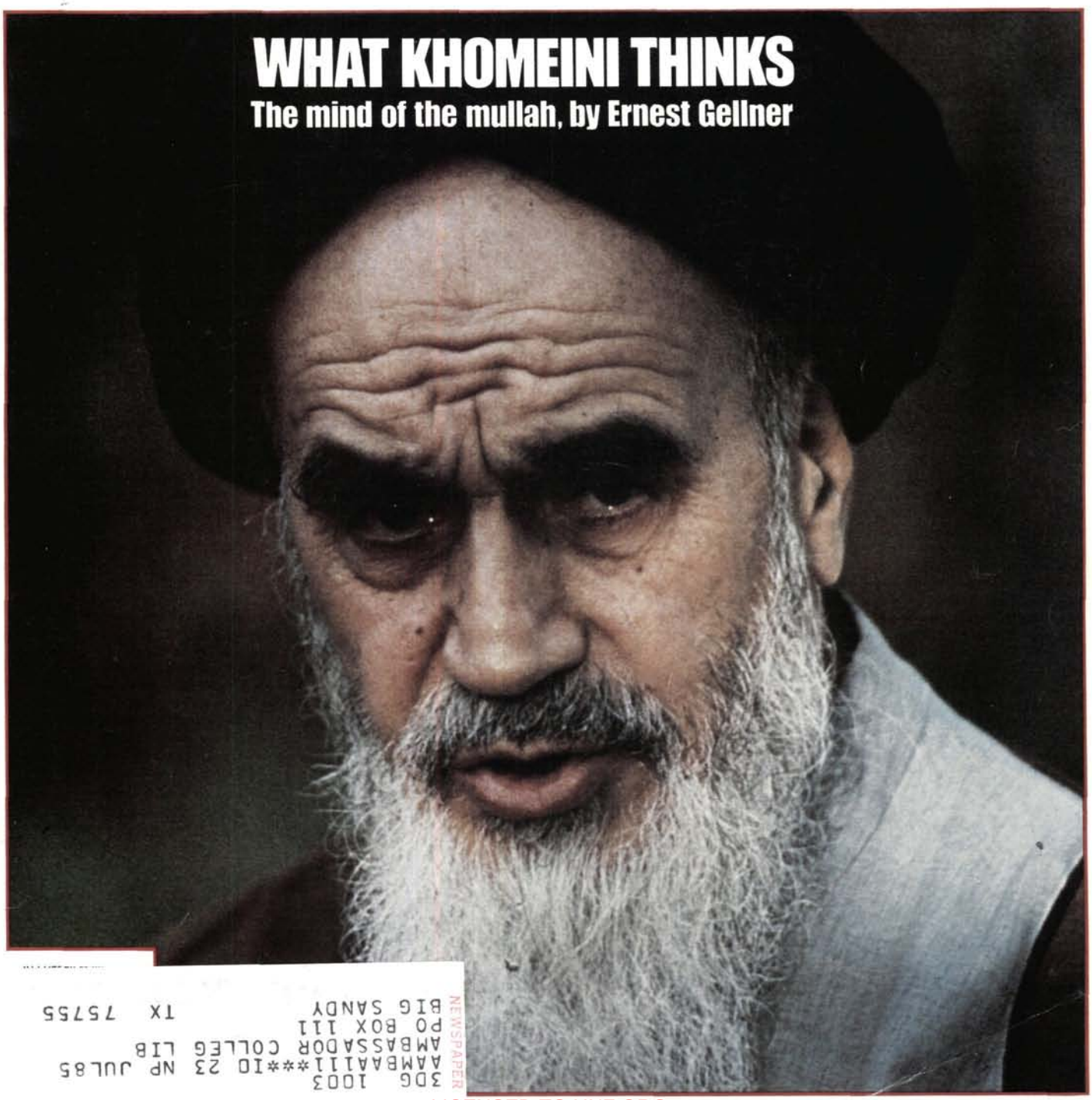

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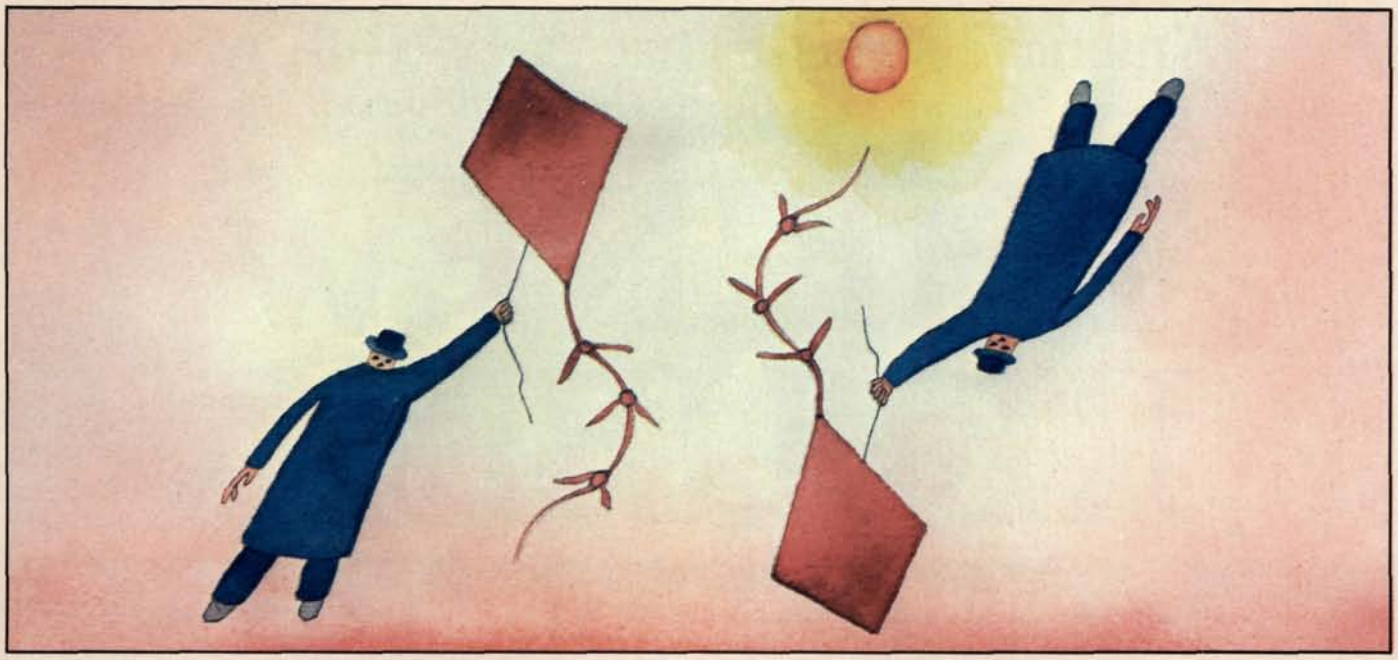

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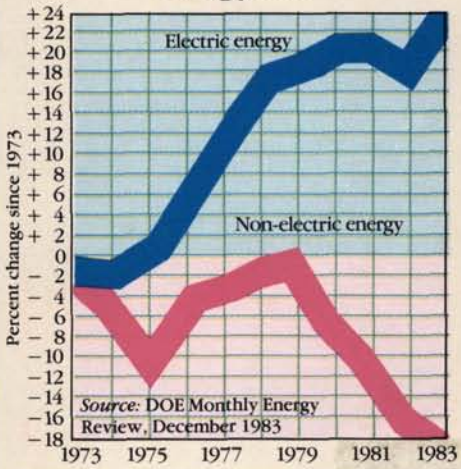
Electric vs. non-electric energy use



While the use of non-electric *energy has declined, U.S. consumption of* electric *energy has increased by over 25% since the Arab oil embargo.*

Renewing the nuclear promise

Utilities have learned to be more realistic about what it takes to construct and run a nuclear plant. They have been beefing up their nuclear engineering staffs and strengthening their operator training programs.

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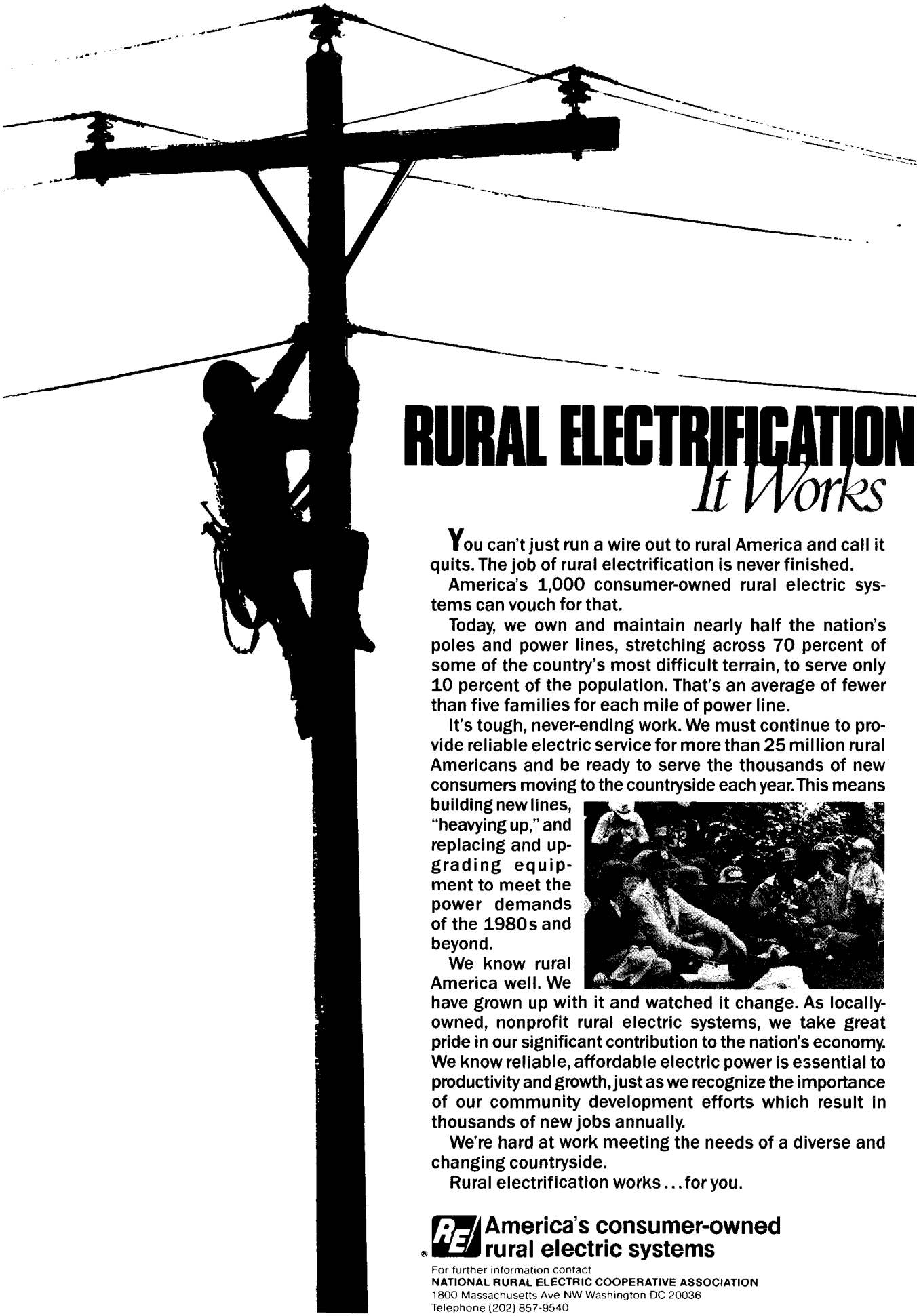

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CORRESPONDENCE

THE GREAT DIVORCE

To the editors:

Arthur T. Hadley's masterful analysis of our military establishment ("Why Johnny Can't Fight," TNR, May 7) could have noted three other by-products of the "Great Divorce" that he so perceptively discussed.

First, the army has difficulty in drawing upon the best talent to fill officer commissions, particularly through ROTC. Commentators have observed both the demographic imbalance in the ranks of ROTC and the declining numbers of "prestige school" officers among its graduates. Given today's economic situation, the military is able to attract and retain ample numbers of officers. Yet an officer corps that is not attractive to the keenest minds on our campuses presents a real challenge to military preparedness.

Second, Mr. Hadley's characterization of our enlisted troops in Europe in 1974 with their ". . . vacant faces . . . slack jaws and dead eyes . . . numb to discipline, alien to responsibility . . ." is unkind, if undoubtedly accurate. But Napoleon once reportedly observed there was no such thing as poor soldiers, merely poor officers. An officer corps whose principal values include excessive careerism, "ticket punching," and revolving-door command rotations hardly inspires loyalty and dedication among the troops. We must not unjustly chastise enlisted soldiers for circumstances not of their making.

Finally, Mr. Hadley states that Congress has deprived the unglamorous logistical "tail" of support at the expense of the fighting "teeth." This is undeniably true, but misleading. Each rival service, after all, prepares its own initial budget. And each appears to desire newer barracks, hospitals, and commissaries (which admittedly enhance morale) at the expense of spare parts. The Pentagon's questionable management practices, compounded to be sure by Congressional pressures, lend themselves to inordinate waste. The "Great Divorce" suggests we need fewer but better officers and civilian bureaucrats, a return to conscription, and a more prudent, not necessarily more costly, allocation of the defense dollar.

ARTHUR REYNOLDS
Galveston, Texas

STAR WARS DEFENSE

To the editors:

How disappointing to see Charles Krauthammer's pessimism regarding antimissile defenses ("The Illusion of Star Wars," TNR, May 14). Mr. Krauthammer says, "effective boost phase defense is more than just difficult. Given all known technologies, it's practically undoable." That is just not true. I know that many scientists have tried to foster that impression, but they are not actively working in this area, and are therefore not up to date on the technologies involved. They are substituting political bias for technical knowledge. Those who are actually working with the relevant technologies are confident that the job can—and will—be done.

Much the same attitude prevails about countermeasures. Critics say the attacker can spin his missiles, coat them with ablative paints, or attach fenders to try to mask the rocket exhaust plume. These countermeasures have been examined and found to be no fatal hindrance to defense.

Finally, space-based defenses have not been advanced as a way to abolish deterrence, but as a way to abolish Mutual Assured Destruction. There is an important difference between the two. MAD necessitates a constant escalation of offensive weaponry: How much is enough to assure your enemy's destruction? Space-based defenses allow a shift toward a policy of Assured Survival. The defenses will protect us against a nuclear missile strike. Such protection will not be 100 percent leakproof. But a defense that can stop 90 percent of the attack will deter the attacker. Not even the sternest hawk would launch a nuclear attack in which fewer than 10 percent of the attacking missiles would reach their targets. Space-based defenses offer a new kind of deterrence based not on mutual destruction but on defense against attack.

BEN BOVA
National Space Institute
Washington, D.C.

PUZZLED IN WINDY CITY

To the editors:

David Moberg's article on Chicago Mayor Harold Washington ("Washington's Crossing," TNR, May 14) offered the strangest view of reality that I've read in your magazine in a good number of years.

THOMAS PLOTKE
Chicago, Illinois

HART'S FIRST MOVE

To the editors:

I am disturbed by a gross inaccuracy in Hendrik Hertzberg's review of Theodore Sorensen's book, *A Different Kind of Presidency* ("The Mushy Center," TNR, April 23).

In regard to nuclear arms control, Mr. Hertzberg states: "The 'unilateral initiative' for 1985 [suggested by Sorensen] would be an immediate U.S. freeze on the production, testing, and deployment of strategic nuclear weapons, to be continued as long as the Russians did likewise and pending negotiation of formal treaties. I think this is an excellent idea. But it is considerably more radical than anything being suggested by even the Democratic candidates, all of whom speak of a bilateral, negotiated freeze."

Senator Hart has come out strongly for a "unilateral initiative" to break the current arms race deadlock. His policy statement on nuclear arms control begins, "If I am elected President, on my first day in office I will call for a six-month suspension on testing of all nuclear weapons as the first step toward a comprehensive test ban treaty. I will also challenge the Soviets to take the same steps to ensure human survival." Such a step clearly constitutes the sort of "unilateral initiative" referred to by Mr. Hertzberg.

MARCIA B. GOLDBERG
Nuclear Arms Control Advocates for Hart
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Mr. Hertzberg replies:

A six-month suspension of testing is a good idea, but it is a modest proposal indeed compared to a freeze on the production and deployment of nuclear weapons as well.

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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FROM WASHINGTON

JERSEYGATE

We have reached a political nadir of some sort if the Democratic Party candidate for the leadership of the free world is chosen on the basis of a casual remark about New Jersey. Yet it seems possible history will record that Gary Hart lost his chance to be President when he stood with his wife, Lee, on a Los Angeles terrace and uttered these fateful words: "The deal is that we campaign separately; that's the bad news. The good news for her is she campaigns in California, and I campaign in New Jersey." Lee Hart mentioned that in California she'd held a Koala bear, and the Senator added in mock rue that in New Jersey he'd held "samples from a toxic waste dump."

The TV networks played this incident very big, the analysts of the print media went to work on it, and it appears to have blossomed into a gaffe. This could cost Hart the New Jersey primary—and therefore, everyone agrees, any hope of the nomination.

The "gaffe" is now the principal dynamic mechanism of American politics, as interpreted by journalists. Each candidacy is born in a state of prelapsarian innocence, and the candidate then proceeds to commit gaffes. Journalists record each new gaffe, weigh it on their Gaffability Index ("major gaffe," "gaffe," "minor gaffe," "possible gaffe," all the way down to "ironically, could turn out to be a plus with certain interest groups"), and move the players forward or backward on the game board accordingly.

Hart's Jerseyblooper contained both of the key elements of the gaffe in its classically pure form. First, as explained in this space three weeks ago, a "gaffe" occurs not when a politician lies, but when he tells the truth. The burden of Hart's remark was that, all else being equal, he'd rather spend a few springtime weeks in California than in New Jersey. Of course he would. So would I. So would Walter Mondale, no doubt, along with the vast majority of Americans, including, quite possibly, most residents of New Jersey. This doesn't mean that California is more important than New Jersey, or even a better place to live and raise a family. It certainly doesn't mean that people who live in California are superior to people who live in New Jersey. Quite the contrary. Just as youth is wasted on the young, California is wasted on Californians. Hart's remark just means that California is more appealing than New Jersey as a place for someone from neither state to spend a few weeks.

The second element of the classic gaffe is that the subject matter should be trivial. Political journalism has evolved in somewhat the same direction as literary criticism, which is now dominated by people called deconstructionists. Deconstructionist criticism is indifferent to the literary value of the "text"—novel or poem or whatever—it is analyzing. The "text" is just grist for arcane and self-referential analysis. A work of no special merit is even preferable in a way, since it doesn't distract from the analysis, which is the real show.

Similarly, political journalism dwells in its own world of primaries and polls. If necessary, journalists can take a significant fact such as Jesse Jackson's continuing embrace of the repellent Louis Farrakhan—drain it of all its moral implications, and turn it into a gaffe. But campaign mechanics make for preferable subject matter. And the ideal "text" for political journalism to chew on is an episode of no real meaning or importance—such as a small joke about New Jersey—which can then be analyzed without distraction exclusively in terms of its likely effect on the campaign. The analysis itself, of course, is what creates that effect: a triumph of criticism the deconstructionists can only envy.

Once the press certifies that a gaffe

continued on page 42

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
JUNE 18, 1984

AMERICA'S GULF STAKE

One gets the impression from coverage of the Iran-Iraq war that it is just another one of those intractable, irrational ("lunatic," says one commentator) struggles between mysterious Muslims battling for reasons too arcane for Westerners to understand. You know, like Lebanon—whose conflict Americans were encouraged to deem incomprehensible by the widespread notion that it was part of an obscure feud dating back first ten years, then a hundred, then eight hundred, and finally two thousand (long before there were any Arabs anywhere). Now that Syria has won, Lebanon is strangely quiet—at least in the media—though Lebanese are still being murdered by one faction or another every day. Could it be that the designs of the combatants were not so irrational or inscrutable after all? No matter. One step ahead of the sheriff, the who-can-understand-these-fanatics theory has skipped out of Beirut and moved to the Persian Gulf.

Take, for example, David Brinkley's introduction on his May 27 Sunday show on the Gulf war. "One theory is that Iran and Iraq are shooting at each other and shooting at oil tankers in the Persian Gulf because neither is able to win its war against the other," said Mr. Brinkley. "They hope that somehow they will bring in other countries and then somehow end their war." He got it half right. Without doubt, the regimes on both sides of the battle line in the Persian Gulf are exceedingly wanton in their brutality. But only one side started—and has any interest in—shooting up oil tankers in the Gulf. And only one side, the same side, is trying to drag outside powers—namely the United States—into the war. There is no mystery about the sudden outbreak of war on international shipping in the Gulf. The dynamics of the conflict are clear. But to understand it we have to begin at the beginning.

Iraq started this war, thinking it could grab the oil-rich province of Khuzestan from a revolution-weakened Iran. Iran recovered, brought the war back to Iraqi territory, and, despite the failure of its human-wave attacks, is well positioned to win a World War I-type war of attrition. Iran has three times the population of Iraq. Most important, Iran's oil facilities on the Gulf are intact. Iraq's, on the other hand, were destroyed at the outset of the war. Iraq's sole means of support are one pipeline through Turkey and the largesse of its wealthy, weak neighbors to the rear, principally Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Iran, not only for reasons of revenge but also because it tastes victory, refuses all Iraqi offers of peace. Khomeini demands the overthrow of the Baath regime of Saddam Hussein. Mr. Hussein is a not only a ruthless dictator (which in itself would not make him unattractive to Khomeini or exceptional in the region, either), he is also a secularist, an aggressor, and the man who—as part of a deal he cut with the Shah—expelled Khomeini from his refuge in Iraq in 1978. The neighboring Arab states from Saudi Arabia to Jordan are terrified at the prospect of an Iranian victory—not because they harbor any fond feelings for Iraq (which has often had tense relations with Jordan, claims Kuwait outright, and has long sought hegemony in the Gulf), but because the spread of Islamic fundamentalism into the Arab heartland would be extremely destabiliz-

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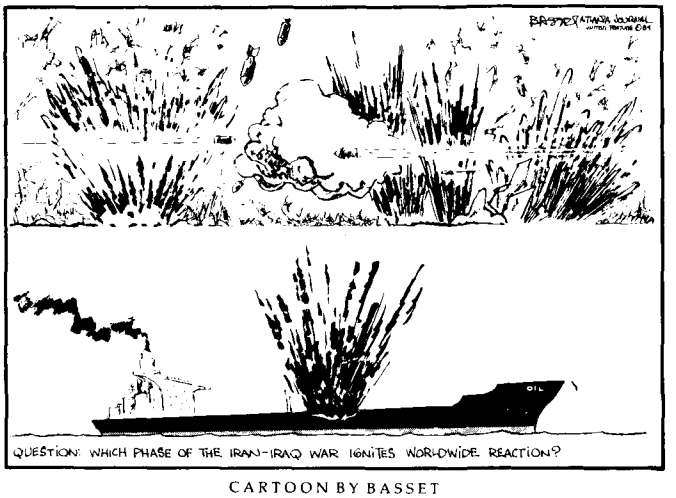
ing for all the monarchical ("moderate") regimes in the area.

So Iraq, facing the prospect of a war of attrition it cannot win, decides to force an end to the war by attacking Iran's economic jugular. Using Super Etendard airplanes with Exocet missiles acquired from its oil client France, which had sunk billions of investment dollars into Iraq, Iraq attacks first Iran's crucial oil terminal on Kharg Island, and then—to scare away the international oil trade—neutral ships transiting the Gulf. The Iranians, who had not previously attacked Gulf shipping and who need to keep the Gulf open to finance their war effort, retaliate by attacking a few ships on their way to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. (They can't attack Iraqi-bound ships because there are none, Iraq having lost its oil-exporting facilities on the Gulf at the start of the war.) Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, which for four years have financed the Arab army arrayed against Iran, declare themselves shocked—shocked!—to find international law violated by . . . the Iranians. With their tiny partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council, they get the Arab League to run to the Security Council and demand condemnation of Iran as the aggressor. Behind the scenes they ask for Western, particularly American, military help out of this jam. They need the Western help because they can't defend their own shipping. And if Saudi and Kuwaiti shipping is vulnerable, the whole sea-war strategy, which was aimed at forcing Iran to settle the war, collapses. And if the Arab side must call off the sea war, Iran is likely to prevail on the ground.

THE POINT of this historical exercise is to demonstrate that when the United States comes to help the Arab side in this war, it will be for reasons of the purest realpolitik, without a shred of higher purpose. The United States will be supporting the aggressors—who are double aggressors, having both started this new war at sea to save the old one they started and are now losing on land, and having barbarously resorted to poison gas. (They probably would have used nuclear weapons by now had it not been for Israel's creative enforcement of the principles of nonproliferation.) As for Iran, it goes without saying that no higher purpose would be served by supporting the Khomeini regime, which has brought in four years more misery and death than the Shah did in a lifetime.



CARTOON BY BASSET

IF NOT for higher reasons, then for what reasons? As enunciated in the Carter Doctrine of 1980, the United States has strategic interests in the Gulf. But they are of two radically different kinds, which are often confused.

First, the United States has an interest as an oil importer, but it's a minor one. Only about 3 percent of U.S. consumption comes from the Gulf. The United States has 400 million barrels in strategic oil reserves, and because of the oil glut there is vast unused capacity among oil exporters throughout the world. Nigeria, Venezuela, Indonesia, and other hard-pressed Third World exporters would be delighted to increase oil production that had been artificially restricted to prop up OPEC's price when the glut got out of hand in early 1983. The closing of the Gulf for weeks, or even months, would probably mean no more than an end to the present oil glut and a mild rise in prices, if that. For the United States the economic impact would be minimal. Indeed, during the worst of the Gulf tanker attacks at the end of May, gasoline prices in the United States *fell*.

In pure economic terms, the Persian Gulf oil trade is of peripheral interest to the United States, of major interest to NATO and Japan (which depend much more heavily on imported Gulf oil), and of vital interest only to the Gulf states themselves, whose entire economies hinge on their ability to export oil.

The second U.S. interest in the Gulf, however, is vital. The United States cannot tolerate the fall of the oil states to the permanent control of a hostile power. That's what the Carter Doctrine declared, implicitly identifying the hostile power as the Soviet Union. Iran belongs in that category, too. Denying the region to the Soviets or the Iranians is not an economic imperative, since both are happy to sell oil to anyone for hard currency and technology. The imperative is geopolitical, because loss of the oil states would radically shift the balance of power in the Middle East, and the world, against the West and its allies. In the Middle East, the dominoes are made of paper.

So the United States is committed to a policy of balancing power in the Gulf. It wants to preserve an intact Iran as a barrier to the Soviet Union, and it wants to preserve an intact Iraq as a barrier to Iran. Nothing more. That's the deeper reason why the United States finds itself prepared to help the weak Gulf states defend themselves against Iranian attacks on their ships. Not to prevent increased insurance levies by Lloyds, or a little panic buying by the Europeans (which is probably therapeutic: they should be reminded every once in a while that there is a world beyond—and supplying—their cozy hearths). The deeper reason is that if the Saudis and Kuwaitis can deter an Iranian counterattack on their ships, Iran will find itself on the short side of a war at sea; and with its oil economy threatened, it might be prepared to call off or,

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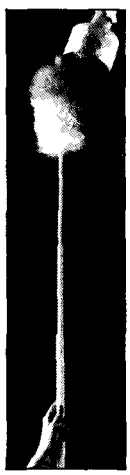

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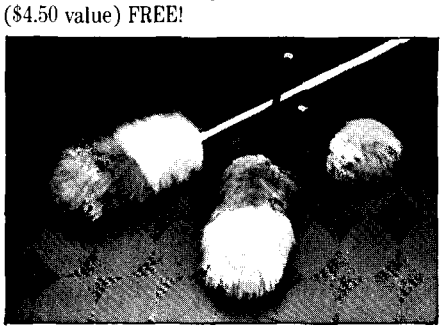

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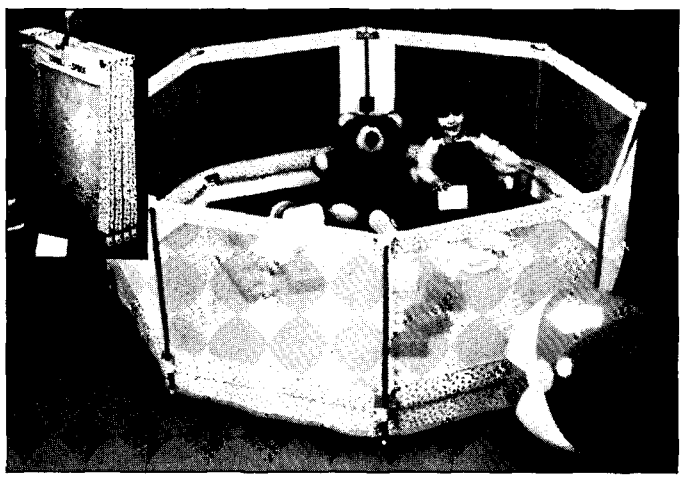

The Crawl-Space puts the typical playpen to shame. It provides nearly twice the play area at half the weight with a fraction of the moving hassle. The jointed eight-panel design allows a multitude of configurations so it fits anywhere in the house even around corners, enclosing a 16 sq. ft. protected play area. In seconds it folds up into a neat secure 24" x 24" x 4½" package. The Crawl-Space has an open floor, is made of chrome plated steel tubing with vinyl skirting, polyester netting, and ratchet hinges that protect against a child changing the configuration once it has been set up. Recommended for children up to 20 months. **$49.00** ($6.95) #A962.

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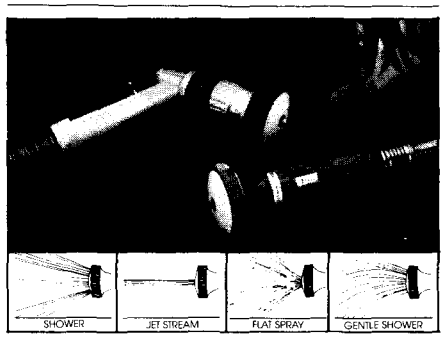

The biggest problem with most hose nozzles is getting and maintaining the desired water flow. The answer is Nozzle Five. This hose nozzle allows you to set the water flow to any of five positions. Use the shower setting for heavy watering or car washing, gentle shower for potted plants or window boxes, flat spray for misting foliage and the jet stream for force cleaning patios, decks and gutters. The fifth setting is a convenient stop action. Nozzle Five is constructed of durable, non-corrosive plastic for **$11.00** ($1.95) #A481. Two for **$18.00** ($2.95) #A4812. We also offer the Nozzle Five hose nozzle with the advantage of a pistol grip (left). The pistol action gives you even more control over water flow. Cost is **$14.00** ($2.95) #A1046.

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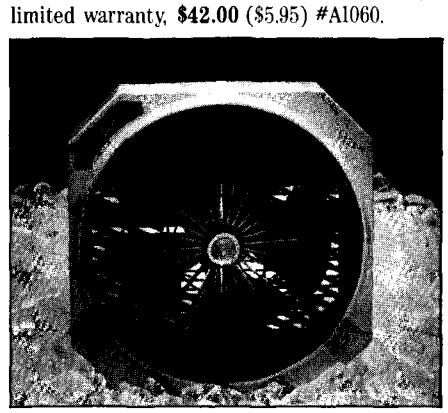

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more likely, simply to wind down its land war against Iraq. A peace treaty or armistice is probably too much to hope for, but a reduction of the level of conflict to, say, that of Libya-Chad or Jordan-Syria or Lebanon-Lebanon, would do. In other words, helping the Saudis defend their ships is not done to keep Toyota factories humming, but actually to collaborate with Iraq in stalemating the war with Iran.

It is a three-cushion billiard shot, cool and precise. Interestingly, one hears hardly a single moralist on Capitol Hill demanding an end to our assistance to the evil, aggressive Iraqis. There is no government in the world that we are aiding—neither the Philippines nor South Korea nor El Salvador—that is worse. Perhaps at a distance of five thousand miles it is easier to see that a superpower must sometimes support one evil when the alternative—in this case radical Shiite domination of the Middle East—is worse. It is a strategy to be carried out without enthusiasm, but with intelligence. The latter, unfortunately, is what is lacking in the Reagan Administration's approach to the problem.

We don't quarrel with the Administration's strategic understanding of the problem. However, as Mr. Reagan demonstrated in Lebanon, it is not enough to have the right strategic idea. One then has to take care in carrying it out, or one ends up with disaster anyway. The Administration's principal problem is its chronic misunderstanding of the Saudis, a perceptual deficit now approaching the level of delusion. For three and a half years it has kept counting on Saudi influence, Saudi pressure, Saudi anything to advance our interests in the Middle East, whether those interests involved Camp David, the Reagan plan, or the Israel-Lebanon treaty. Mr. Reagan and Mr. Weinberger have been disappointed every time, and yet they keep coming back to the well—literally. Saudi Arabia is not a country: it is a large oil field owned by a family endowed with many mercenaries (Pakistani and Korean workers in the oil fields, Taiwanese pilots in the American-made jets) and much pride.

That pride is not enough to keep Saudi Arabia from asking for American weapons and American protection. But it is enough to keep it from publicly acknowledging these requests, or from granting the United States any of the rights or privileges (to say nothing of the respect) due a protector. As a result, the United States prostrates itself to beg the Saudis to ask for American help. The United States even sends Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to the Saudis, as *The Wall Street Journal* reported, to make it easier for them to ask for American help. This is pump priming gone mad. The United States has to send the most sophisticated weapons in its arsenal (weapons Congress had previously blocked from shipment to Saudi Arabia or Jordan) to a country that refuses to ask for them openly. And for what? As an inducement to help them ask us for some more help to save them in their war. The absurdity of the situation goes largely unnoticed, because it has become the norm of U.S.-Saudi relations. We accept without complaint, as a kind of fact of nature, that the Gulf states must somehow keep us at arm's length and make ritual denunciations of the United States in international forums. During the debate on the Arab demand that the Security Council brand Iran as the aggressor, the Kuwaiti ambassador warned the Council that if it did not act to stop the war, a calamity would befall the Gulf. He wasn't referring to an Iranian victory. He meant "foreign intervention." He was asking to be saved from American protection.

As part of this policy of protecting themselves against the calamity of American intervention, the Saudis and their Gulf partners have resolutely refused to allow any American presence in the region. It is very difficult to defend an area as large as the Persian Gulf with aircraft carriers. What the United States needs, and has requested in the past, is the use of air bases in the Gulf states. (Only Oman permits such a presence, and is constantly under pressure from the Saudis and other neighbors to loosen its American connection.) These requests are all rebuffed. Instead, the Saudis want, and immediately get, the most sophisticated American weapons.

WHAT KIND of response is this? It is presumably a response to the attacks on Saudi ships at sea. But the Stingers are for defense of fixed land-based installations. They were never designed, and have never been used, to protect shipping. Recognizing this peculiar anomaly, Administration officials claim that the dispatch of the Stingers is to guard against kamikaze Iranian air attacks on Saudi oil fields. But then, as Leslie Gelb reports in *The New York Times*, high-ranking Administration officials acknowledge the absence of any reason to believe the Iranians are planning such an attack. The real reason for the Stingers turns out to be that "there was little choice but to try to reassure the Saudis, politically and psychologically, with new arms shipments." Arms for reassurance, though they have no use. The most time-honored of American policies toward Saudi Arabia.

And it's not as if the Saudis don't have other arms—the best arms, perfectly designed to defend Gulf shipping—to reassure them. The Saudi problem is not the absence of weapons, but the inability or the unwillingness to use them. The Saudis have spent billions in the last few years for Western arms. They have the most sophisticated possible defense against air attacks on Gulf shipping: an air force of sixty-two F-15 fighters, equipped with American-made air-to-air missiles and backed by four American-manned AWACS planes that can spot targets up to 150 miles away. The Iranians, on the other hand, have a pathetic remnant of an air force consisting of between twenty and forty-five Vietnam-era F-4 fighters. The Saudi response, with their formidable air defense, has been to acquire Stingers and do nothing. Actually, more than nothing. Not only have they not used their sophisticated weaponry to defend themselves, but when the State Department announced that the Saudis had scrambled some of their fighters in response to an Iranian attack on a ship, the Saudis were reportedly "furious" and denied the report. They didn't want to provoke the Iranians. The

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idea that what the Saudis lack to defend their sea lanes are shoulder-launched missiles is absurd. It leads one to conclude that some deception is going on. The Saudis, and a pliant Administration, are willing to exploit this crisis to arrange a transfer of weapons that Congress has strongly opposed, although it is a crisis the weapons will do nothing to solve.

The folly of this policy is the belief that these empty shows of weaponry will somehow protect shipping in the Gulf. The underlying problem is the Saudis' weakness and ineptitude in their own defense. The Saudis' response to Iranian attacks on their ships has not included a single missile, or even a single bullet, fired in anger. Instead, Saudi Arabia and its Arab neighbors have headed straight to the U.N. to demand Security Council condemnation of Iran as the aggressor. They are well-practiced in this exercise: this is not the first time an Arab state in conjunction with its neighbors has invaded a non-Arab country, lost the battle, found its own territory occupied in response, and then begun attacking innocent bystanders (sometimes oil tankers, sometimes commercial airliners, sometimes foreign embassies) to drag in the great powers to bail them out. The irony is that they then demand that the world condemn the victim as the aggressor. The crime is that when the victim is not Iran but Israel, the world community complies.

What the West needs to defend its interests and the coincident interests of the Gulf states is a presence on the ground. If Saudi Arabia wants protection, the United States has an interest in giving it. It should offer to help the Saudis use the weapons they already have, weapons designed for precisely the defensive task the Saudis face in the Gulf. We should offer training, American-controlled refueling tankers, and as a last resort air cover if the Saudis try but fail to defend themselves. In return, we should demand the rights and privileges due a protector: an open invitation, base rights, and a thank you.

If Saudi pride prevents them from providing these, we should find ourselves sympathetic but otherwise occupied when they call on us. The Saudis could then proceed to approach their most pliant friends—the French, the British, and the Japanese, unburdened by world power and the need for world respect that comes with it—and let them have the privilege of holding the kingdom's hand. The United States will root for them all from the Indian Ocean.

SUBMINIMUM SEDUCTION

Is "deregulation" coming to the job market for teenagers? President Reagan hopes so. He says the minimum wage prices young people out of jobs, and he wants to modify this governmental intrusion in the economy. "The cruel truth is while everyone must be assured a fair wage, there's no compassion in mandating $3.35 an hour for start-up jobs that simply aren't worth that much in the marketplace," he declared in his May 17 radio address. The President proposed allowing businesses to hire youths aged 16 to 19 for $2.50 an hour, 75 percent of the current minimum, during the five-month period from May 1 to September 30. Mr. Reagan estimates that this subminimum "Youth Employment Opportunity Wage" would create four hundred thousand new jobs.

MR. REAGAN'S idea has a strong intuitive appeal. The teenage unemployment rate, which currently stands at 19.4 percent, is a national shame; for black teenagers, the rate is an alarming 44.8 percent. It is at least plausible that teenagers don't get hired because they don't yet have the skills to produce $3.35 worth of goods and services every hour. And aren't there plenty of currently unfilled "marginal" jobs—movie ushers, bellhops, grocery stock clerks—that businessmen might fill at lower wages?

Maybe. But most economists agree that while the minimum wage closes off some jobs to unemployed teenagers, its overall effect is rather small. The most widely accepted estimate is that a 10 percent increase in the minimum wage reduces teenage employment by one job in a hundred. In 1981 the Congressional Minimum Wage Study Commission concluded that a youth subminimum had only "a limited potential" for creating new jobs. In any case, thanks to inflation, the real minimum wage has been *falling* since it was last raised in 1981 ($3.35 is only worth $2.87 in 1981 dollars). If the minimum wage alone determined how many youths get jobs, teenage unemployment should have declined steadily during the last three years. And it's also worth remembering that there is already a federal program which permits employers to hire students at $2.85 per hour year-round. This program has been in place since 1961 and currently employs over five hundred thousand young people. It's not clear how much room employers would have for still more subminimum-wage workers.

Still, the Reagan proposal is only a three-year experiment; what could be the harm in giving it a try? The answer is that an effective subminimum wage might be worse than an ineffective one. Seventy percent of the roughly 12 million minimum-wage workers are adults. It is unlikely that employers would actually fire adults in order to bring on youths for the summer. But a subminimum wage for teenagers would give businesses an incentive to pass over low-skilled adults. Minimum-wage jobs are already marginal positions. With a subminimum wage for youths, adult workers would face the additional hazard of being effectively shut out of unskilled jobs for five months each year.

The President says the subminimum will reduce black teenage unemployment, which he correctly labeled "a national tragedy." But the lower wage is not specifically targeted to blacks. Four out of five unemployed teens are white; a similar, or higher, percentage of new

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jobs created by a lower minimum will probably go to them—both because they have higher skills and access to better education and because they live in more prosperous areas. And for many black teens—especially girls with dependent children—a job isn't a "start-up" to higher skills. It is a means of survival. When you reduce a teen mother's earning potential by 25 percent, you are not doing her a favor. You may in fact be forcing her to go on welfare. Of course, you are doing her employer a big favor—especially if, like many teens who work for the minimum wage, she works for a fast-food chain. The subminimum would give McDonald's and Burger King huge benefits for hiring summer workers they hire every year anyway.

There is a whiff of Social Darwinism in this proposal of Mr. Reagan's, as there is in all of Reaganomics. The minimum wage embodies a basic American consensus, arrived at during the New Deal, that there is a limit to the level of wage competition among workers that is consistent with human dignity. The idea of a subminimum wage compromises this principle. It sanctions a labor market free-for-all in order to serve efficiency. And it says that, when unemployment is high and young workers are desperate, the government's job is to teach them the "cruel truth." If we were to take Mr. Reagan's rationale to its logical conclusion, we should have a sub-subminimum wage for black teenagers, because they have fewer skills than whites. Maybe there should be an even lower rate for black teenage females. Maybe there shouldn't be a minimum wage. After all, four years ago Mr. Reagan himself was insisting that "the minimum wage has caused more misery and unemployment than anything since the Great Depression."

WE WOULD be less skeptical about Mr. Reagan's sincerity if he hadn't already cut some job programs (like Job Corps) and eliminated others (like CETA). Those programs had their shortcomings, but they created jobs, and they embodied the concept that if youth unemployment is truly a national tragedy, the national government can't fob off responsibility for ending it. What can the government do now? New York Mayor Ed Koch's plan to hire teenagers for minimum-wage public service work (and provide them with basic literacy training in the bargain) looks like a model worth emulating. The Carter Administration ran a pilot project which gave jobs to youths who agreed to stay in school and earn a high school diploma. The program employed seventy-six thousand youths in seventeen high-unemployment areas, and reduced their school dropout rates by 12 percent. Senator Edward Kennedy and Representative Gus Hawkins have recently proposed reviving this tested program; it would cost $600 million if targeted only at high poverty areas. The odds are that Congress, hemmed in by the budget deficit, will avoid anything like these proposals. But the least Congress can do is abstain from going along with the latest instance of Mr. Reagan's subminimum economic decency.

NOTEBOOK

□ WHAT DID YOU DO IN THE WAR, DADDY? The controversy of the week in Europe concerns the refusal of West Germany's allies to allow Chancellor Kohl to attend the D-Day commemoration on the Normandy beach. Mr. Kohl's discreet attempts to procure an invitation were indiscreetly rebuffed, in large measure due to the opposition of French veterans groups. The papers are filled with reports of red faces. After all, it is said, Mr. Kohl's presence "would mark the reconciliation of the Allies and Germany," as E. J. Dionne Jr. wrote in *The New York Times*. Well, the embarrassment is all for nothing. The Allies and West Germany are already reconciled; West Germany is an ally, and a rather ardent one. But Germany deserves no place in the commemoration of its blessed defeat. The Second World War is not an old wound. Forty years is not a long time. There would be nothing at all "appropriate," as people of taste say, for the leader of Germany to stand solemnly shoulder to shoulder with the leaders of the nations that bore unprecedented burdens to rid the world of the evils of his own. Mr. Kohl should instead reflect quietly, in the company of his people, on what happened. We do not mean to insult the Chancellor, or his people; their reflections should include quite justified pride in Germany's democratic sequel to its Nazi past. But the survivors of Germany's perfidy and the veterans of the Allied armies do not deserve to be insulted, either. Modern memory is short enough; there is no point in making it any shorter.

□ THERE HE GOES AGAIN: Charles Krauthammer has copped one of the Champion Media Awards for Economic Understanding, which are given annually by the Amos Tuck School of Business Administration at Dartmouth College and the Champion International Corporation. Mr. Krauthammer won second place in the general magazine category for his essay "The Oil Bust Panic" in the February 21, 1983, issue of TNR. In addition to the usual plaque and handshake, the award carries a cash prize—$2,500, which could come in handy in case the premise of Mr. Krauthammer's article proves false and oil prices go through the roof.

□ TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "Mr. Roth's stories do not yield pleasure as much as produce a squirm of recognition: surely, one feels, not all of American Jewish life is like this, but all too much of it is becoming so. Anyone who might object to these stories insofar as they are 'reports' about a style of life cannot do it on the ground that Mr. Roth is hard-spirited—for given his material what else can he be?—or that he is unskilled—for, like so many other young writers these days, he has quickly absorbed the lessons of modern craftsmanship, perhaps a bit too quickly. If one is to object to these stories on nonliterary

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grounds, out of a concern for the feelings or reputation of middle-class American Jews, it can be done only by charging that, in effect, Mr. Roth is a liar. And that, I am convinced, he is not." ("The Suburbs of Babylon," review of Philip Roth's *Goodbye Columbus*, by Irving Howe, TNR, June 15, 1959.)

Can 'perpetual neutrality' survive?

COSTA RICA TEETERS

San José, Costa Rica

IN RECENT MONTHS Costa Ricans have taken up a cry that has been repeated here at times of crisis for almost a century: if only we could move our country from where it is. Costa Rica is an anomaly in Central America. It is not one hundred years of solitude we've enjoyed, but one hundred years of free schooling. We've had an effective, liberal democracy since 1948 and even expanded our extensive welfare system. To be sure, we have an enormous foreign debt and our social programs have become increasingly unmanageable, but until recently most Costa Ricans were confident that the problems were primarily economic, not political. Still, Costa Rica has never been immune to its neighbors' troubles, and today more than ever, it is finding it increasingly difficult to maintain its position of peaceful neutrality.

As perhaps the most civilized country in Latin America, Costa Rica has had the privilege of being, at one time or another, the refuge for almost all the political exiles of Latin America. There is a coffee shop in San José called the Soda Palace, which is known throughout Latin America as having seen more revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries than anyplace else in the world, including Zurich in the days of Lenin and Zinoviev. The exiles receive political asylum on the condition that they do not engage in any political activity against the governments that exiled them. Never, of course, has this condition been complied with. Rómulo Betancourt, the great Venezuelan democrat, had his headquarters in San José when he was conspiring to overthrow the dictatorship of Perez Jimenez; Fidel Castro plotted here against Batista; and so too with the Colombians, the Nicaraguans, the Salvadorans, and the Guatemalans. We have now had two waves of Cubans: those fleeing Fidel succeeding those fleeing Batista. And we have had two waves of Chileans: those fleeing Pinochet following those fleeing Allende.

"Who are all the coffee drinkers who sit here all day?" a Canadian journalist asked me a few months ago. "Well," I said, "in San José it is rumored that a third of them are C.I.A. agents and another third are K.G.B. agents." "And the other third?" he asked. "The other third," I told him, "is here to listen to offers."

Since early 1979, when Costa Rica became a rear guard camp and supply depot for the Sandinistas fighting to overthrow Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua, the intrigue has moved closer to home. I was living in London at the time, and I came back for a few days in June. I was astonished to find one of my closest friends here, a conservative physician of impeccable anti-Communist beliefs, completely absorbed in the task of aiding the Sandinistas. The Costa Rican government, which gave generous support to the revolutionaries, told Somoza, in all honesty, that it lacked the military capability to control the Sandinistas. The situation became what the Cubans call an *arroz con mango* (rice with mango): Communists, government officials, democratic politicians, citizens of the right, the left, and the center were all thrown together in the same enterprise. The overthrow of Somoza became a national fiesta. Weapons came from Panama, from Venezuela, from Central America—some say even from the United States. Finally, weapons began to arrive from Cuba. "When I saw the Cuban airplanes landing here filled to the brim with weapons, my enthusiasm started to cool a little," my friend the physician told me ruefully.

The fiesta has long since ended. As soon as the Sandinista comandantes began to insult the *Yanquis*—and that happened only a few weeks after they took power—Costa Ricans started to change their minds. With the exception of the extreme left (which comprises about 2 percent of the total vote), the country is overwhelmingly pro-American. Our relations with Nicaragua got positively chilly when Edén Pastora's *contras* began operating out of the northern part of this country. The Sandinistas complained that Costa Rica was harboring the *contras*.

IN EARLY 1983 the Costa Rican government proposed establishing an international peacekeeping force on the border between the two countries, contending that without an army of its own, it did not have the capability to control the *contras*. The Sandinistas, of course, knew that this was true, having enjoyed our lack of military capability (and our hospitality) before they took power. But they refused, saying that the offer was merely an excuse to bring American troops to their border. So there was nothing left for President Alberto Luis Monge to do but proclaim Costa Rica's "perpetual neutrality." He did so in a solemn ceremony last fall in the National Theater in San José (attended by, among others, the American and Russian ambassadors, hundreds of prominent Costa Rican citizens, Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, and the Secretary General of the Communist Party). Everyone, it was evident, was *very* neutral.

How long can this last? Twice in the past, in 1948 and in 1955, Costa Rica was invaded by Somoza, and both times the government appealed to the Rio Pact, which holds that if one country in Latin America is a victim of aggression it can appeal to all the other countries of the hemisphere for help. Both times Somoza retreated to Nicaragua. During the crisis of 1955, the United States sold to Costa Rica four or five old airplanes at $1 each, but José Figueres,

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Costa Rica's president at the time, does not remember if they were ever paid for. In lieu of an army, Costa Rica has a Civil Guard, which is responsible for police duties in the cities; and a Rural Guard for the countryside. Both the civil and the rural guards have always been considered, justifiably, poorly equipped and virtually untrained. Sometimes they go out on duty with just a single bullet in their pistols.

HOW CAN Costa Rica hope to defend its neutrality with an army like that? Especially when Sandinista Comandante Daniel Ortega says, as he did in April, that "if an invasion is launched against Nicaragua, based in Honduras and Costa Rica, the scenario is that the war will spread to those two countries. That follows all the law of military history. We are not going to be the exception. And there are already, in Costa Rica, American troops supposedly doing other things. Nicaragua will attack Costa Rica if Costa Rica helps an invasion of Nicaragua." Several weeks ago the Sandinistas did offer to sign a "non-aggression pact." But Costa Rica refused, saying it had no intention of invading Nicaragua. (How could we invade Nicaragua, some wits asked, when the civil and rural guards can hardly control pickpocketing in the streets?)

Every day somebody says that the Costa Ricans should do more to prepare themselves against an invasion by Nicaragua. There are continuous skirmishes between the Sandinistas and the *contras* on the Nicaraguan border. Some officials say they are asking the United States for military help, but others deny this, and still others say an appeal for $7.8 million in weapons was made last year and is now being answered by the United States government. A few months ago, the government refused the offer of the Reagan Administration to place one thousand military engineers near the Nicaraguan border, to help build highways. Now the United States has renewed this offer, but it is still unclear whether Monge's government will accept it.

The confusion and uncertainty has deepened here in the last six months. On May 15 there was a march in San José in favor of "peace and neutrality." Thousands of people, both moderate and leftist, attended. Some observers said that the purpose of the march was to oppose the United States' efforts to push Costa Rica into fighting Nicaragua, but others said it was to oppose Cuba's and the Soviet Union's efforts to push Nicaragua into fighting Costa Rica. Immediately after the march, Costa Rica and Nicaragua once again agreed to appoint a commission on border disputes, but, like the several commissions that preceded it, it is unlikely to have any effect on the current situation.

The internal political debate has grown livelier and more chaotic. The battle between the left and the government is fierce, with the left accusing the government of being soft on the *contras* and on "the C.I.A. agents within the government." The controversy within the left itself is more ferocious. The Vanguardia Popular Party (the Communist Party) split into two factions a few months ago. The Socialist Party (composed of extreme leftists) followed suit, as did the Movimiento Revolucionario Del Pueblo (equally extreme leftists). The rightists, for their part, are accusing the government of being too soft on the Sandinista sympathizers within its ranks. (For good measure an extreme rightist organization, the Movimiento Costa Rica Libre, has split too.) Finally, the centrists accuse the left of not being patriotic, and accuse the right of pushing the country toward war with Nicaragua.

On April 23 Joel Brinkley of *The New York Times* reported that C.I.A. money sent to the *contras* was being used to bribe Costa Rican government officials. A great rumpus followed, and the government strongly denied the charges, asking *The New York Times* to provide the evidence that supported the story. The *Times* refused to do so, and the government said it would open an investigation. The government accused *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* of waging a campaign against President Reagan's reelection, and said that this was why they published articles critical of our democratic country. A few days later, at the United Nations, the Sandinista government released secret documents of the Costa Rican government which it said proved that government officials were involved in helping the *contras*. Sandinista officials said it obtained the documents "from friends of the Sandinist revolution within the Costa Rican government." Another big rumpus followed, and the government promised to open another investigation. "COSTA RICAN OFFICIALS ARE SPIES FOR THE C.I.A.," said the left-wing newspapers. "A LARGE NEST OF SANDINISTA SPIES INFILTRATES THE GOVERNMENT," said the other newspapers. The official investigations go on, and some people say that they will show both accusations to be correct.

President Monge is going to visit eleven European countries in June to rebut the persistent campaign waged by leftist groups there which alleges that the Costa Rican government is an American puppet. President Monge, preparing himself for that crusade (which the government has called Operation Truth), said recently that he has "never, never been subjected to any kind of pressure by the American government in order to influence the direction of our foreign policy."

THE CIRCULAR debate rages on. In early May, Sergio Ramirez Mercado, a leading Sandinista official, published an article here asking why Nicaragua would want to go to war with Costa Rica. A Costa Rican conservative commentator answered that it would do so to provoke American military intervention, thereby causing President Reagan to lose the next Presidential election. To which another prominent conservative said the Sandinistas would not invade precisely because American intervention here, just before the American elections in November, would greatly help President Reagan get reelected.

And amid all this discussion of American Presidential politics here, former President Figueres went to Nicaragua again, to repeat to the Sandinista comandantes the same things he has been telling them for the last five or six years: not to transform their historical grievances against the United States into an ideological and political vendetta;

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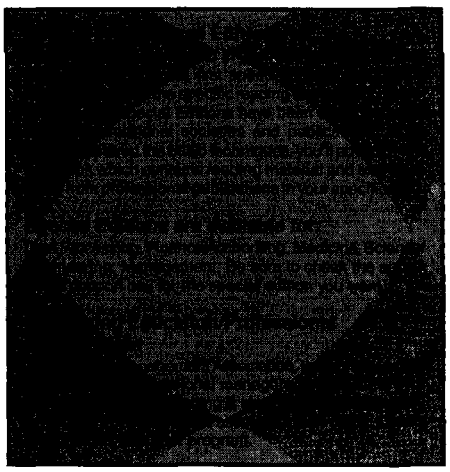

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not to align themselves with "the other bloc," not to declare war on the United States, but to look into the future with understanding of past American mistakes and enter into a genuine friendship with America. It is perhaps a little too late for that. "Up to now," he said to me on the day he left for Managua, "these Sandinist boys have been doing exactly the opposite of what I have been advising them to do."

Two blocks south of the Soda Palace in San José is the Club Union, the favorite gathering place of the Costa Rican rich. One sunny morning fifteen years ago, I ran into an old friend, a famous and brilliant Communist journalist, on the sidewalk across the street from the club. The pro-Americanism of Costa Ricans, their ideological conservatism, and their anti-Communism all contributed to his despair and resignation. "*Qué va* [Oh, hell]," he told me. "It is very, very difficult to work here. I now believe that this will be the last country in the world to go Communist. The next to last one will be the United States."

I didn't know quite how to console him.

"Well," he said, "perhaps it is even better that way. Because then, after the whole world has gone Communist, we will finally seize power here. And those S.O.B.s"—he said, glancing angrily at the Club Union—"will have nowhere to flee."

Is it too late to save Costa Rican democracy? Despite all of the recent rumblings, nobody seems to really think so. No matter how bad things get, many people expect that the United States will again come to their rescue. They remember the airplanes that the United States provided us in 1955 for $1 apiece. More than a few Costa Ricans believe that this time they will get an even better bargain on American warplanes: the price will be low and it will include the pilots to fly those beautiful machines.

LUIS BURSTIN

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Craxi's 'freeze' gets the cold shoulder.

MISSILE GAFFE

Rome

A FUNNY THING happened to Italy's *Ostpolitik* on the way to the recent NATO meeting in Washington. On May 3 Prime Minister Bettino Craxi, in a move that surprised his own government and startled the United States, disclosed at a press conference in Lisbon that Italy would propose a new initiative on the controversial Euromissile deployment in an effort to break the East-West deadlock: NATO, he said, should declare itself ready to suspend further installation of Pershing II and cruise missiles in exchange for a Soviet return to the bargaining table in Geneva and a corresponding freeze on the installation of Soviet intermediate-range missiles. The move was all the more surprising because Craxi had been a firm supporter of the European decision in 1979 to respond to the Soviet SS-20 missiles targeted against Western Europe, and Italy was one of the three countries where the U.S. missiles have actually been installed.

DURING THE next few days Craxi came under fire from members of his five-party governing coalition, none of whom had been informed beforehand about the announcement, and from the United States. Secretary of State George Shultz sent a blunt message opposing any sort of "moratorium," and Ambassador Maxwell Rabb delivered a more cordial but equally frank letter from President Reagan. The Americans stressed that a freeze would leave the West at a serious disadvantage, with 243 Soviet missiles in place compared to 41 American missiles, and thus would remove any incentive for the Russians to negotiate seriously.

At first Craxi defended his proposal, explaining that it would involve a major Soviet concession, since Chernenko had vowed he would not return to Geneva unless all the U.S. missiles were removed. But on May 8, under mounting pressure at home and abroad, Craxi backed down and said he had offered no new proposal—only a "reflection" he had talked about many times before.

The U.S. Embassy here, eager to contain a budding break in allied ranks, insisted that the "press" had blown Craxi's proposal out of proportion. "In a few weeks the story will be completely forgotten," said one official. Privately, however, another U.S. official characterized the move as Craxi's "first big mistake."

Craxi's Italian critics drew a distinction between the substance of the proposal and the manner in which it was released. There was widespread criticism of the fact that not even Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti had been informed. It was an "impulsive personal gesture," one official explained, made by a leader untutored in the nuances of foreign policy. Another said it showed a lack of "seriousness and discretion."

On substance, there was less criticism. Although some influential politicians and commentators agree with the U.S. position—one said "Craxi's move has delayed for at least a year the Soviet return to the bargaining table"—more feel, as Craxi does, that something has to be done. On May 11 Craxi told his Socialist Party Congress that the superpowers were engaged in a "dialogue of the deaf," and that NATO must take the initiative and find a way to "resume the negotiations." Italy is a loyal ally, he said, but it cannot remain silent; it will continue to "develop a policy of dialogue and cooperation with Eastern Europe to reduce tension and mistrust."

Ever since he took office in August 1983, Craxi—the first

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Socialist to head the Italian government in the postwar period—has moved toward a more assertive, dynamic role on the world stage. Assertiveness had a bad name in Italy after the Mussolini years, and it was only recently that it became acceptable once again to speak with pride of Italy's international role—as in the case of the troops contributed to the peacekeeping force in Lebanon. Meanwhile, Italian influence has been increasing quietly, primarily through trade and private investment, throughout the Mediterranean and the Middle East and as far afield as Mozambique.

Craxi, always known as an Atlanticist, began his term in office by reinforcing his NATO connections, meeting with leaders in London, Paris, and Bonn before proceeding to Washington on October 18, where he got along well with President Reagan—primarily because of his solid commitment to place U.S. cruise missiles in Comiso, a remote part of Sicily.

He then began to turn to the East, in part for domestic reasons, to undercut his political opponents on the left, who accuse him of being too pro-American. Italy's peace movement is comparatively small, and demonstrations against the missiles were less dramatic than those in Germany and Great Britain. Still, the issue remains alive. In the main square of the medieval walled city of San Gimignano, about twenty miles north of Siena, young people patiently collect signatures calling for a popular referendum on the missiles—even though Parliament had voted in favor of them on a number of occasions.

Craxi would like to extend his appeal to the peace activists, who generally vote for the Communist Party. A tough, energetic politician, he rebuilt a shattered Socialist Party into a pivotal parliamentary force with 11 percent of the vote in the last election. He intends to make it the major party of Italy. The Communist Party, though it won nearly 30 percent of the votes, regards him as a serious threat.

ON APRIL 11, just a few weeks after the sixteen cruise missiles in Comiso became fully operational, Craxi headed east—to Budapest, which no Italian Prime Minister had visited since the reunification of Italy in the nineteenth century. The atmosphere was extremely cordial. The two sides signed economic agreements eagerly sought by the Hungarians. Italy is their third largest Western trading partner, and, as one Italian official put it, "Hungary needs trade with the West just as it needs air to breathe." On the larger question of the East-West impasse, both sides maintained their positions, but found common ground in urging their superpower partners to return to the negotiating table.

Curiously, Italy's two Communist newspapers, *L'Unita* and *Paese Sera*, reported that Hungarian party leader Janos Kadar suggested to Craxi the idea of a missile freeze by both sides at their present levels—a definite step away from Chernenko's insistence that all U.S. missiles must be removed. The Hungarians may have some autonomy in internal economic affairs, but it does not extend to foreign policy initiatives. If Kadar really made that suggestion—and it was not picked up by other Italian newspapers—it had to be made with the approval of the Kremlin.

Less than two weeks later, Foreign Minister Andreotti went to Moscow to see Chernenko—the first of a series of West European leaders to meet with the new Soviet chief. The visit was marked by a mixture of flattery and threats. Andreotti, a former prime minister who had negotiated with Brezhnev during the years of détente, was given a red-carpet welcome; at the same time, in a toughly worded toast, Gromyko reminded his guest of Pompeii, asking, "How many Vesuvios do you think there are in one nuclear bomb?"

Once again, bilateral agreements were reached, principally because the Italians decided to resume their purchase of Siberian gas, after a long "pause for reflection" prompted by the crises in Afghanistan and Poland. Once again, on the larger issues, there was no concrete progress, although Andreotti left talking about Chernenko's "new ideas," which he could not reveal, but which he said were worthy of discussion. Andreotti said that even if the Russians persisted in their refusal to return to Geneva, there were other issues that could be discussed in other forums—such as the non-aggression treaty proposed at Stockholm—in other words, a policy of "small steps" to build confidence until the larger issues could be tackled.

As soon as Andreotti returned to Rome, the East Germans invited Craxi to visit Berlin. *Ostpolitik* was in train, and there was a sense that progress was being made.

IT WAS in this context that Craxi publicly disclosed his idea in Lisbon, where he was discussing it with fellow Prime Minister Mario Soares. If he had not spoken out of turn, he might have succeeded in winning European support for a joint proposal at the NATO meeting. His concern about breaking the deadlock is widely shared in Europe. His trip to Hungary and Andreotti's trip to Moscow are hardly isolated instances; they are part of a parade of West European leaders heading east for talks. Holland is reluctant to accept American missiles; Denmark, which will not have any on its soil, refuses to help pay for them. An Italian Foreign Ministry official says there have been times when coordinated European pressure has helped to bring about a change in U.S. policy. For example, it was largely responsible for Reagan's decision to propose the zero-option plan.

Officially, the United States is opposed to a freeze at the current levels as a way of getting the Russians back to the table. But unofficially the United States has indicated to the Russians through a number of channels that it is prepared to be flexible—and has delayed the timetable for the deployment of some additional missiles as a sign of that flexibility. The Russians, however, have shown no interest. It took them nearly a week to respond to Craxi's proposal, and then they called it "timid and incomplete." Still, as the Italian Communist Party newspaper *L'Unita* pointed out, the Kremlin did not reject the

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idea entirely. Craxi's "reflection" may be swept under the rug for the time being as the NATO allies, following the American lead, stress their unity in an effort to impress the Soviet Union. But their protestations cannot conceal the fact that there are deep and growing differences within the alliance on the question of nuclear missiles in the heart of Europe.

MADELEINE G. KALB

Madeleine G. Kalb is a Washington-based specialist on Soviet-American relations.

How the Great Society defeated poverty.

THE WAR WE WON

LOST WARS are never celebrated, only cursed. Is this why the War on Poverty, begun under Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society, goes unmarked on its twentieth anniversary? In his State of the Union Address to Congress in January 1964, President Johnson said: "Many Americans live on the outskirts of hope. Our task is to help replace their despair with opportunity." He proposed that the government take the initiative to bring ". . . better health, and better homes, and better training, and better job opportunities to help Americans." A few months ago President Reagan likened support for the policies the War on Poverty promulgated to "a no-growth dinosaur mentality that offers nothing for the future but repeating the failed past." Even the party that embraced the Great Society and the War on Poverty twenty years ago now distances itself from them as much as possible. A belief prevails among Republicans, Independents, and Democrats alike that the programs and policies of the 1960s were frequently inept and often failures. That belief is mistaken.

Lyndon Johnson called for two general courses of federal action, which profoundly influenced the policies of the succeeding fifteen years. First, his Great Society, which provided the economic direction behind the War on Poverty, gave priority to growth-oriented policies likely to stimulate the private sector into generating far more new jobs. The budgetary deficit, the growth rate of the money supply, and the ratio of social to defense spending were all moderately increased to enable the government to promote high levels of economic growth. Second, and equally important, the War on Poverty directly attacked the debilitating nutritional, health, and housing conditions that mired the lives of millions of impoverished Americans. Federal funding for job training and other skills programs was increased; Medicaid was enacted; and food assistance, public housing, and urban renewal programs were substantially expanded.

After the 1960s, when rising unemployment was on everyone's mind, it became widely believed that these policies had failed in their first crucial task: that of stimulating the creation of vast numbers of new job opportunities. In fact, after 1964, America's performance in generating jobs far surpassed that of any other major Western nation. Although unemployment climbed by 2.5 percent between 1965 and 1980, during those same years 28 million jobs were created, marking a 38 percent increase in employment opportunities. Japan increased its number of jobs by less than 20 percent; West Germany by less than 5 percent. It had taken our own economy the previous *forty-five* years (from 1920 to 1965) to generate 30 million new jobs.

Normally, widespread admiration would have followed such an outstanding record of job creation, about 75 percent of it realized by way of propelling the private sector's growth. Yet these were abnormal times. Largely as a result of the baby boom and a change in attitude among women about employment, fifty-five million Americans poured into the work force from 1965-80. America was unique in this situation. No other major Western nation experienced soaring birth rates spanning the two decades following World War II. The numbers in America caused the work force to swell by a total of 30 million workers, amounting to an extraordinary 40 percent increase. Unemployment could not help but climb. Nevertheless, the policies inaugurated in the mid-1960s brought a 38 percent increase in jobs, thereby effectively containing the rise in the rate of unemployment to below 3 percent.

Considering the massive wave of workers entering the labor market, no set of programs that the opposition proposed, even if cast in the mold of past success, could have contained unemployment as effectively. Had the government encouraged a continuation of the performance of the "golden" 1950s, or even the 1960-65 era (between 1950 and 1965 job opportunities increased by 21 percent), only 17 million, rather than 28 million, new jobs would have come into being during the 1965-80 years. Unemployment would then have risen by a further 13 percent, to almost 18 percent of the labor force; worse still, baby-boom Americans, aged 16 to 35, would have experienced a jobless rate approaching 25 percent.

INSTEAD, the economic and social policies following 1964 nearly doubled the annual rate of job creation between 1950 and 1965. This allowed a good part of the crowded baby-boom generation to escape staggering levels of unemployment, and saved millions from leaving their children such a legacy. Among these Americans, many today are entirely unaware of the enormous contribution the policies made to their lives.

At the same time as these policies contended, for the large part successfully, with the massive wave of workers, they also substantially reduced poverty. At the beginning of the 1960s, before the advent of the crowded generation, the proportion of Americans living in poverty already stood at nearly 20 percent. Moreover, the crowded labor

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markets that existed throughout the years following 1964 complicated the task of alleviating poverty. Despite all this, by 1980 only about 7 percent of the American public remained in poverty, a reduction by three-fifths from the percentage of the early '60s. Census figures regarding family and individual income show that this sizable decline in poverty, affecting 25 million Americans, was almost entirely the result of the intervention of government programs, not of the private economy's growth. The private economy during these years could not reach down to the poor because its immense growth was wholly given over to the task of creating the vast numbers of new jobs required by the exploding labor force.

THE WAR on Poverty decisively changed the living conditions facing the poor. Programs such as food stamps virtually eliminated serious malnutrition among low-income children and adults in America. Medicaid and Medicare greatly increased the access of low-income Americans to health care. In turn, the enlargement of both the nutritional and medical programs led to a decline in the infant mortality rate among minority Americans of 40 percent between 1965 and 1975, a drop that was eight times larger than the decline that had taken place in the ten years prior to 1965. The expansion of governmental housing programs helped to reduce the proportion of Americans living in overcrowded housing from 12 percent in 1960 to 5 percent in 1980. Those living in substandard housing declined from 20 percent to 8 percent. Such are only a few of the contributions of the "failed policies of the past."

But didn't these many assistance programs burden the economy and lead the nation into "a decade of economic retreat," as the President and others have claimed took place in the 1970s? The policies of these years were intended to promote business expansion and economic growth, and they achieved that end. Contrary to common belief, the so-called decade of economic retreat witnessed powerful economic growth, fully matching the advances that took place in our most affluent decades. For example, the growth rates of the '70s (taking into account the real gross national product, after-inflation personal income, real investment in business and industry, improvement in manufacturing productivity, and industrial production) were all at least the equal of those in the '50s, which the President repeatedly refers to as "model economic years." In the '70s, real (after-inflation) income per American actually rose at nearly *twice* the rate of growth of the '50s. It was precisely because of the strong economic growth rates of the '70s that the nation was able to generate the record numbers of new jobs by which we nearly met the crowded generation's entry into the labor market.

Runaway inflation, too, is frequently believed to have been a by-product of the Great Society and the War on Poverty. True, inflation did climb to a degree because of the government's policies to stimulate demand and thereby encourage the private sector to grow and to create new jobs. However, another major cause of inflation in these years must be taken into account: the exceptional rise in the international price of oil. The three years of double-digit inflation after 1960 (1974, 1979, 1980) were all years in which OPEC oil prices rose sharply. During the eight remaining years of the '70s, inflation averaged less than 6 percent. Even during those years in the late '70s, which escaped sharp OPEC oil-price increases (1976-1978), the rate of inflation averaged slightly under 7 percent, not markedly higher than the projected 5 to 6 percent increase for the coming year. With the sole exception of West Germany, the United States surpassed every other major Western economy during the '70s in the control of inflation—despite the fact that no other nation had to cope with the massive labor increase that America did.

Still another major objection to the War on Poverty is that the enlargement of the social programs promoted the dependence of individuals and families on governmental assistance. The bulk of the evidence suggests the reverse. Aid to Families With Dependent Children is an oft-cited culprit, but according to the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, two-thirds of A.F.D.C. families stay on the rolls for fewer than three years. Studies by the University of Michigan of thousands of welfare families from 1968 onward show that when families return to welfare, most do so for short periods, and then often because the economy has experienced a downturn and job opportunities have dried up. These same studies reveal that children from welfare families are no more likely to become welfare recipients upon establishing their own families than are nonwelfare children from similar income levels.

The policies and programs of the years following 1964 contributed decisively to the realization of many notable national objectives: generating substantial real economic growth, containing the rise of unemployment, and reducing poverty. Without these policies, most Americans would find the nation today a markedly different and lesser place to live. How otherwise would the current Administration have proposed to meet the needs of 55 million Americans entering the work force in a mere fifteen years? How could it possibly have controlled inflation more firmly without permitting unemployment to reach skyward to 20 percent? Those in power today promise a brighter and stronger economy, yet their own projections for future economic growth—even when assuming the most optimistic of conditions—differ little from the actual growth rates of the '70s, the decade they disdain. Only when we comprehend the immensity of the challenges facing America's economy in the years following 1964 will we begin to celebrate the stunning successes that the Great Society and the War on Poverty helped the nation to achieve.

JOHN E. SCHWARZ

John E. Schwarz is associate professor of political science at the University of Arizona, and the author of *America's Hidden Success: A Reassessment of Twenty Years of Public Policy* (W. W. Norton).

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What do Christian and Jewish fundamentalists have in common?

THE TEMPLE MOUNT PLOT

BY BARBARA AND MICHAEL LEDEEN

A CASUAL OBSERVER might be excused for believing that nearly all of the recent violence in Israel has been part of the usual cycle of Arab-Israeli conflict. The observer would be wrong. Though some of the recent acts, such as the plans to place time bombs on Arab buses in Jerusalem, seem to be the work of extremist Israeli nationalists, much of the destructive intent is fueled by a mixture of nationalist politics, messianic longing, and the search for roots. In fact, some of the current extremism is a direct outgrowth of the ancient forecast of the Apocalypse.

The targets of the most spectacular incidents over the past months have been Muslim authorities and the area they control in Jerusalem, but for the most part the people who planned or participated in the attacks are the violent fringe of an informal movement that stretches from the United States to the Middle East, and encompasses millions of evangelical Christians as well as some Israeli Jews. This unlikely coalition rests upon a common belief that the Final Days are upon us. For the Christians, this means that the Second Coming of Christ is imminent; for the Jews, the Messiah is about to arrive. Both believe that the crucial spot for the fulfillment of the Biblical prophecies is the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, because that is where the Temple of Solomon is to be rebuilt. According to the fundamentalist understanding of Christian prophecy, three great events are required for the Second Coming: Israel must be a Jewish nation; Jerusalem must be a Jewish city; and the Temple must be rebuilt. Today only the third condition remains to be met. Though most Jews believe that the building of the Temple will occur after the arrival of the Messiah, a growing number of deeply religious Jews believe that efforts to rebuild the Temple, and other steps for its proper functioning, should be made before the Messianic Age.

Yet the Temple Mount is under Muslim control, and, according to a common archeological view, the Dome of the Rock stands on the site of the Temple itself. To make matters worse, the Muslim political-religious trust which administers the Mount area—the *Waqf*—does not permit members of other religions to pray on the Temple Mount; they are permitted access to only a part of the area, and only for a few hours. On Fridays and Muslim holy days, the Mount is closed to all but the Islamic faithful. The refusal of the Muslims to grant Jews and Christians the right to any sort of religious activity on the Mount has intensified the already strong passions of the messianic groups, prompting some of them to violence.

On March 10, 1983, more than forty Jews suspected of planning to penetrate the Temple Mount were arrested in Jerusalem. Four of them were armed youths caught trying to break through an underground passage to the Mount. Their legal fees—amounting to $50,000—were paid by wealthy Christian evangelicals from Texas. Less than a year later, on last January 27, Israeli security forces thwarted an assault on the Mount and seized eighteen grenades and over thirteen pounds of explosives that had been smuggled onto the Temple site. The police later found a secret cache of arms outside Jerusalem that included 107 Claymore mines, 6 anti-tank rockets, and a large quantity of high explosives. There is good reason to believe that the money for this group, the so-called Lifta Band, also came from Christian sources in America.

One of the investigating officials remarked that "the two key suspects in the [attempt] . . . knew what they wanted: to obliterate the Muslim presence on the Mount so that the Messiah would arrive. The motivations of those who supplied financing and supplies are a bit more complicated." He noted that the suspects began to be cooperative only after an Israeli officer had "scolded them for using a Bible published by a Christian group as their religious source."

At the Temple Mount the religious passions of the Muslim, Christian, and Jewish religions intersect as at no other on earth. Not only is the Mount the site of Solomon's Temple, it is also where Abraham came to sacrifice his son Isaac; where Jesus taught, and threw the moneychangers out of the Temple; from where Mohammed ascended through the seven Heavens into the presence of Allah.

Except for a few years during the Crusades, the Temple Mount has been under Muslim control since the conquest of Jerusalem almost fourteen hundred years ago. This control was reaffirmed as recently as 1967, after the Israeli conquest of the Old City, when General Moshe Dayan, in a remarkable gesture of toleration and largesse, ordered the removal of Israeli flags from the Islamic buildings on the Mount. He promised that there would be no tamper-

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Michael Ledeen, Senior Fellow at the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies, and Barbara Ledeen, a consultant who was formerly assistant editor at *Biblical Archeology Review*, are writing a book on the Temple Mount plot.

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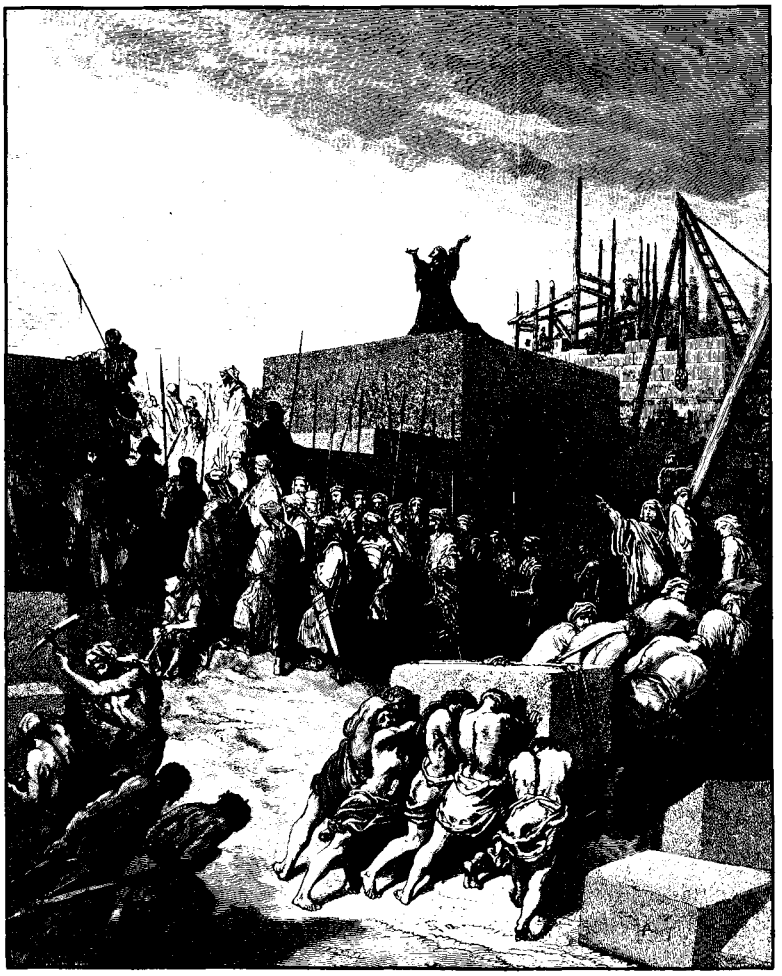
ing with Muslim control over the area. The promise has been kept.

The *Waqf*'s primary allegiance is to Jordan, whose King pays considerable money to the trust each year. Consequently, it does not accept the reunification of Jerusalem, nor does it respect the Law for the Protection of the Holy Places, which guarantees the sites of all three religions in the rest of Jerusalem. Jordan did not permit the Jews to pray at the Western Wall when it was under Hashemite control, and is not inclined to bend—either for Christians or Jews—on the matter of the Temple Mount. Furthermore, as political and messianic passions have risen, the *Waqf* has set about eliminating any evidence linking the Temple Mount to the pre-Islamic period. Ancient walls (including at least one from the time of the Second Temple) have been bulldozed away or deliberately buried; trees have been planted in areas that are historically sensitive and may contain other bits of evidence; land has been recontoured to disguise suggestions of historical ties to Jewish holy places; water cisterns have been excavated; and buildings have been constructed or reconstructed to hide remains of ancient artifacts. Yet because the city of Jerusalem has evolved a remarkably durable modus vivendi among the religious groups, most politicians and leaders—and particularily Mayor Teddy Kollek—have been reluctant to tamper with the standing arrangements.



THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE, WOOD ENGRAVING AFTER GUSTAVE DORÉ
THE GRANGER COLLECTION

Political pragmatism, however, is unlikely to withstand the messianic passions that are directed at the Temple Mount, and even the ancient rabbinical and more modern governmental injunctions that have kept observant Jews from going up to the Mount are now being reconsidered. All Jews are regarded by Jewish law as "unclean," and are therefore forbidden to go onto the Mount. The most sanctified place on the Mount in the days of the Temple was the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant, containing the Ten Commandments, was kept. Since it is difficult to specify precisely where the Holy of Holies was located, and lest someone step on that place even inadvertently (incurring an automatic death penalty, according to ancient law), the injunction against stepping there was extended to the entire area.

The Israeli courts have generally denied the right of Jews to pray on the Temple Mount, but there are signs of change there, too. In 1983 the High Court reaffirmed that the Temple Mount is a holy site for Jews and that, accordingly, Jews not only have the right of access, but a right of worship as well. Nevertheless, the court insisted that because of the delicate and complex situation stemming from Muslim opposition to any Jewish presence on the Temple Mount, the issue has become political. Consequently, the matter of issuing regulations that would establish the place and hours of prayer gatherings has been assigned to the minister of Religious Affairs, but for seventeen years that ministry has remained silent on the issue. Thus, in the words of one of the petitioners, "The court has turned itself into a theater of the absurd. . . . Prayer is legal but you cannot pray."

The driving force behind the Temple Mount movement, however, is the American evangelical community, some 45.5 million strong. The evangelicals met regularly with former Prime Minister Menachem Begin over the years, reportedly urging him to rebuild the Temple, and they raced to Washington this spring to endorse the proposal to move the American Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, citing Biblical prophecies of the day in the near future when Jerusalem will become the capital of the world. Their money, and to a large extent their leaders, provide the wherewithal for the movement.

The most visible link between the evangelicals and the drive to rebuild the Temple is found in the Jerusalem Temple Foundation in Los Angeles, the latest of several organizations (and the only such group in the United States) designed to put pressure on the Israeli government to limit the *Waqf*'s control over the Temple Mount. The chairman and executive director of this ecumenical foun-

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dation are Terry Risenhoover and Douglas Krieger, two Christian evangelicals who have the means, the energy, and the network of friends necessary to catalyze a mass movement (Risenhoover is a multimillionaire, owner of a company called Alaska Land Leasing that is currently planning searches for oil in Judea and Samaria). At the periodic meetings of the J.T.F. in Houston, Washington, and Southern California, you are likely to find such influential evangelicals as Dr. Hilton Sutton, president of Mission to America, Pastor James Deloach of the Second Baptist Church in Houston, and Pastor Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California.

SUTTON, whose "Word of Faith" television broadcast gives him a national audience of millions, is the producer of the acclaimed film, *Ezekiel File*, a biblical analysis of Soviet expansion in the Middle East that he places in the context of the Final War between Gog and Magog. A few years ago he put on a multimedia presentation of the *Ezekiel File* for Begin and his advisers. Deloach's senior pastor at the Second Baptist Church in Houston (the switchboard operator answers calls by saying, "The amazing Second"), H. Edwin Young, is likely to be the next president of the 13 million-member Southern Baptist Convention, America's largest Protestant body. Both pastors accompany groups to Israel and take them to the Temple Mount and to the Jewish yeshivahs training priests for the Temple. Deloach is candid about his objectives: "We will do whatever is right and politically expedient to make that Temple Mount free for all three religions." And as Deloach observes, there is a "ground swell of interest in the Temple Mount just waiting to happen," in part, it should be stressed, because of the spiritual and financial support his Church members give to the Jerusalem Temple Foundation and like-minded organizations in Israel. Deloach believes that "there is activity about the Temple which indicates to us that the climactic day may be nearer than we thought."

Chuck Smith is the pastor of Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California, which in eleven years grew from a congregation of twenty-five to a thriving $1.25 million complex that attracts twenty-five thousand worshipers every Sunday. Pastor Chuck, as he is known, and his chief assistant pastor Don Stewart, take a group to Israel every year; for the past two years he has complained about harassment from the Muslims on the Temple Mount. Smith said that when he tried to lead his group in song, he was told by the Muslim guards that the Temple Mount was "a holy place, you cannot pray here." Pastor Stewart, who said he went to the Temple Mount some fifty times last year during a six-week period, complained that he and his group were repeatedly bothered and were denied permission to go near Solomon's Stables. Smith wrote a letter to the Israeli government, demanding the right to pray in the Temple Mount, but was asked to reconsider because of threats of a Muslim *jihad* "if the modus vivendi is changed in any way unfavorable to the Muslims."

The same letter was hand carried to the two chief rabbis of Israel, who are reportedly considering the formation of a committee to address the Christians' demands. In the meantime, Calvary Chapel is passionately interested in determining precisely where the Holy of Holies—and other significant sites—stood on the Temple Mount. To that end the chapel donated $50,000 for archeological research to be carried out by another evangelical, Lambert Dolphin.

Dolphin, a member of the Jerusalem Temple Foundation who works with the archeology and science team in the radio physics laboratory at S.R.I. in California, has devised methods to survey beneath the surface of the earth without actually excavating. He wants to make soundings in order to draw an underground contour map of the Temple Mount, believing that this may resolve some of the mysteries about the place: Where did the Temple stand? Are some of the treasures of the Temple—including perhaps even the Ark of the Covenant—still buried in the Temple Mount, as some (very dubiously) believe? Dolphin's previous experience is both encouraging and frustrating. His work in Hebron, where he and his team surveyed the ground beneath the Tomb of the Patriarchs (where Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebeccah, and Leah are buried), yielded encouraging results, which indicate that future explorations will be fruitful. But last summer they were asked by Israeli police not to conduct a similar probe on the Temple Mount. Dolphin was told he should discontinue his work "for his own protection."

THE INTENSITY of evangelical fervor and the growing acceptance of nonproselytizing evangelicals in Israel are perhaps best demonstrated by an event that took place a little over a year ago in Jerusalem, between Charles Monroe, the president of the Jerusalem Temple Foundation, and the chief rabbis. Monroe began by describing a Jewish wedding, at which a glass is broken, symbolizing the destruction of the Temple. He then continued by speaking to the rabbis about the book of Ezekiel, in which the prophet describes how God's glory was transported in a chariot from the Temple to the Mount of Olives, where the glory of God remained for three-and-a-half years, waiting for the people to repent. God then told Ezekiel, "I shall gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries among which you have been scattered, and I shall give you the land of Israel." God further promised that once the people had repented, "then they will be My people and I shall be their God." Monroe told the rabbis that "just as we are sure the glory of God left the Temple, so we are certain it will return, as we see in Ezekiel." The rabbis, deeply moved by this Christian exegesis, raised their hands high over their heads and honored Monroe with a rabbinical blessing.

A few years ago, anyone in Israel who talked about rebuilding the Temple, or advocated freedom of prayer on the Temple Mount, was considered to be a lunatic. Today, according to a poll published in the newspaper *Haaretz*, 19 percent of the Israeli public believes there should at least be freedom of prayer on the Mount. The chief rabbinate has created a special committee to "prepare a theological,

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archeological, and architectural report concerning the location of the Holy of Holies on the Temple Mount," and some members of the committee—Rabbi Dov Lior from Kiryat Arba and Rabbi Mordechai Eliahu, the Sephardic chief rabbi—are known to support the building of a synagogue on the Temple Mount. There are groups studying the rituals of the Temple, others studying the manufacture of priestly garments for the Temple, and a growing yeshivah—the Yeshivah Ateret Hacohanim—that is not only training priests (in a fifteen-year course!) for service in the Temple, but is also slowly buying houses in the Arab Quarter of Jerusalem—all of which are located along the routes leading to the Temple Mount. In keeping with the Jewish-Christian symbiosis that characterizes the Temple Mount movement, though the yeshivah and its students are all Jewish, much of its funding—for the yeshivah itself as well as for the houses they are buying and living in—comes from evangelicals, mostly in the United States.

Some of the members of these committees, yeshivahs, and groups are simply interested in the historical or scientific aspects of the Temple Mount. But many—and their number is growing—are working for a Jewish presence on the Mount, and eventually the rebuilding of the Temple. Some of these people are highly orthodox, and firmly believe that the Messiah will soon arrive. Others are primarily Israeli nationalists, who view Muslim control of the Temple Mount as an insult to the Zionist dream. But in the end the religious and nationalistic themes are hard to distinquish from each other, and the effect is the same: *Waqf* control over the Temple Mount is being challenged.

BY FAR the most dynamic of the challengers is the Israeli section of the Jerusalem Temple Foundation, headed by Stanley Goldfoot, a South African Jew who came to Israel in the '30s and fought in the Stern Gang during the postwar period. A passionate nationalist, a highly skilled rhetorician, and a man of demonstrated activism, Goldfoot believes that the Temple Mount belongs to Israel, and to Israel alone. On January 15, 1984, Goldfoot wrote to some American Christian colleagues,

> And possibly of top priority is a certain plan we are studying, which could be of utmost significance. This is a covert operation, details of which I would not divulge in writing or on the phone. But I am sure that it would be as dear to your hearts as it is to mine and selected associates here. Some cash is inevitably involved; I hope we will have enough.

Not even Goldfoot's closest American associates—Risenhoover and Krieger—know what the plan was, but no one who knows Goldfoot doubts his commitment to apply all his energies and imagination to his task of establishing Jewish control over the Temple Mount, and eventually rebuilding the Temple.

Goldfoot sees the Christians as logical allies, for he believes that "Christian fundamentalists are the real modern-day Zionists"; in Goldfoot's view, it is the Christians above all who realize that "we are coming to a crucial period in earth's history, and they want to help fulfill prophecy and thus hasten the coming of the Messiah."

It is thus not so surprising that those who planned to sabotage the Temple Mount in January carried Christian versions of the Old Testament, for the Temple Mount movement is based on a messianic vision that, at least in its first stages, is common to both Jewish and Christian religions. To be sure, there is a basic disagreement, but it is one that will only be resolved in the Final Days. As one Jewish leader put it to us last summer in Jerusalem, "They believe that once the Temple is built, Jesus will come again. We expect the Messiah to come for the first time. Let's build the Temple, and see what he looks like."

This ardent messianism appears to have been part of the motivation for the group of twenty-five radical Jewish nationalists arrested recently in Jerusalem on charges that included murder, attempted murder, possession of weapons and explosives stolen from the Israeli Army, and membership in a terrorist organization. (The other part was anti-Palestinian extremism.) Under an Israeli court order the names of the accused have not been released, although their identities are known to most people in Israel.

IT IS also known that one of the arrested men is a reserve pilot in the Israeli Army. The pilot, who had returned to religion, suggested to his co-conspirators that he steal an F-16 the next time he was called up, and that he bombard the two Muslim shrines on the Temple Mount. The group vetoed his plan because the Western Wall might be damaged, and the pilot would be unable to land his plane anywhere in Israel. Instead, the plotters decided to use explosive devices on the Temple Mount. They even experimented with various explosive materials in quarries near Hebron. Israel Har-el, the spokesman for the Gush Emunim (the Bloc of the Faithful), went on Israeli television recently and said that the people involved in the plotting believed that the destruction of the two Muslim holy places would provoke the Muslims to wage a holy war so terrible that the Messiah would come to save his people from destruction.

Historically, messianic movements tend to be strongest in periods of intense internal turmoil and external threat. Both of these elements are present in contemporary Israel, and the Israelis' anxieties are largely shared by the American "Christian Zionists." All we know about the Temple Mount suggests that it will grow in interest and become a source of conflict, with international consequences that are hard to predict. Up until the arrests of the twenty-five extremists, the Israeli government either ignored the Temple Mount movement or attempted to co-opt it, but neither approach was successful. It remains to be seen whether the arrests will dampen the ardor of the zealots. With the redemption of mankind and the fulfillment of prophecy at stake, arrests are transformed into temporary setbacks, extremism becomes righteous action, and political considerations pale into such insignificance that even conservative Christians and radical Jewish nationalists can become allies. □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Braving the Volcano

"A procession of thoughts like little elderly animals filed through the Consul's mind. . . ." When I reread *Under the Volcano* recently and came to that line, it heightened my apprehension about a film of the book. Luis Buñuel said in his autobiography that he had read eight screenplays of Malcolm Lowry's novel but had found none of them convincing. "If you confine yourself to the action, it's hopelessly banal, because everything important takes place within the main character, and how can inner conflicts be translated to the screen?" Of course they can be so translated—Buñuel himself often did it—but he was right about *Under the Volcano*: it immensely increases the problem of interiority. Everyone who has wanted to adapt the book must have perceived this problem, yet many have attempted it. And it was a newcomer to screenwriting, Guy Gallo, who wrote a version that persuaded a renowned director to proceed, although that director, too—John Huston—had declined previous versions.

Under the Volcano
(Universal)

So this film is a special case. After a vast history of attempts discarded because of difficulty that can't be avoided, it seems unfair to ask complete success of Huston and Gallo. The just question is: How far do they succeed? Even then, the melancholy answer is: Not enough. Gallo's script shows how clearly he understood the problem, and it also shows the steps he took to compensate for it. But many of those steps are, in the modern phrase, counterproductive. Gallo has of course condensed the book (for example, the entire prelude/postlude first chapter is gone); he has quarried out much of the action, amplified some elements, and put it all in chronological order. The result is not "hopelessly banal," particularly because of two superlative performances, but it doesn't compensate for what is lost. Worse, what is done underscores what can't be done, emphasizes that we are missing the very qualities in Lowry's novel that make it important: not only the "inner conflicts" but the prose in which they exist.

Just one instance: the sodden Consul runs from his wife's bedroom embrace when he can't perform (a scene transposed acceptably here for dramatic compression) and staggers right out into the street, where he sprawls, drunk, face down, in the middle of the road in broad daylight. It's a rightly horrid sight, but in the film, that's the end of it. What we miss is the interior monologue that blisters through the prone man's mind, along with the fact—even more important—that he cannot turn off his mind, no matter what happens to his limbs and speech.

The action takes place in Cuernavaca and environs, on the Day of the Dead, November 1, in 1938. Geoffrey Firmin, the lately resigned British consul in the Mexican town, has also lately been divorced by his wife Yvonne, whom he adores and who has gone to New York. For this and complicated other reasons, the Consul, a man of intellect and sensibility and despair, is now boozing himself out of the torpid world around him into a busy inner world. (See the opening quotation.) Yvonne suddenly reappears, repentant. Present, too, is the Consul's half-brother, Hugh, a journalist back from the Spanish Civil War. In the course of the day, several themes figure strongly: the Consul's agony because of his love for Yvonne and his inability to sustain it, sexually and otherwise; his torment because he knows that Yvonne and Hugh once had an affair and he knows that this can't stop his loving them both; Hugh's political concerns, intensified by his Spanish experiences and by his discovery of fascist activity in Mexico subsidized by the Germans. Of the political matters, the Consul is not much more than a wry, grieved observer. At the end, driven by his contradictory anguish and acedia, both awash in drink, the Consul visits the lowest brothel-bar in the vicinity and is murdered by fascist bullies. The shots frighten off a horse that had been tied to a rail nearby—a horse that, as the Consul knew, had been stolen by the fascists from a peon they murdered. The horse plunges into the woods through which Yvonne and Hugh are searching for the Consul. The horse tramples Yvonne and kills her.

Thus the film. Two points illustrate the script's troubles with matters other than interiority. First, chronological order. In the novel we learn of Yvonne's death before we learn of the Consul's, though in fact he was killed earlier. Yvonne's death seems suspended, an open chord, until the closing pages of the book resolve it, making clear that, in effect, the murder of her husband—which caused the horse to bolt—also killed *her*. Gallo must have worried that Lowry's reverse sequence would be confusing, but the script's "correct" time order robs Yvonne's death of appropriate mystery, makes it pat, and robs the Consul's death of the reflexive quality it has in the book, the awesome quality of a fate foreknown and fulfilled.

Second, the political matters in the novel, voiced mostly by Hugh, have

FILMS WORTH SEEING

The Bounty. That Mutiny again, this time with more facts but looser structure. The shipboard scenes are first-rate, as is Anthony Hopkins's Bligh. (Reviewed 6/4/84)

The Natural. Not much kinship with the source, Bernard Malamud's baseball novel; still, what's left and altered gives Robert Redford a fair vehicle. (6/11/84)

Sugar Cane Alley. Martinique, 1930. A black boy's struggle to rise from poverty through education. Vivid and engaging. (4/30/84)

This Is Spinal Tap. A British rock group tours the U.S., and a "documentary" is made of the tour. Quietly savage wit, plus some loud laughs. (5/14/84)

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largely been retained when much else was dropped and have therefore been underscored. Gallo apparently thought that these political matters would give the film dramatic energy, to offset the long slope of the Consul's alcoholic decline. But the political matters are the book's weakest element, a framework imposed to give the book a larger relevance (which it does not lack anyway) and to give the Consul's murder an added irony. In my view, this imposition of the political is what keeps the book, despite its wondrous writing, from greatness. Lowry didn't trust his own gifts enough. If the Consul had gone down the drain for his own personal reasons, had met his senseless death at the hands of ordinary brigands, the book would have lain more securely within the author's grasp, unmarred by enforced obeisance to topicality. And it's precisely those weakest matters in the novel that Gallo expanded to give the film more action.

Huston has directed with the deftness one expects of him but with the touch of the meretricious that one also expects. Puppet skeletons of various sizes are made by the Indians for this Day of the Dead, and, beginning with the footage under the credits, Huston exploits them heavily. In that last saloon, an Indian woman puts a small skeleton on the bar in front of the Consul shortly before his death. Lowry touches this action glancingly, thus tellingly; Huston plunks it at us. Visually, the picture is predictably "Mexican"—nothing that we see through Gabriel Figueroa's camera gives us any Mexican imagery we haven't seen before, much of it through Figueroa's camera.

However, Huston engaged Alex North to write the score; and North, veteran composer for theater and film (he did the music for *Death of a Salesman*, still used), has worked freshly and well.

And Huston gets fine performances from two of his three principals. One of the three is weak. Anthony Andrews, who was Sebastian in the *Brideshead Revisited* TV series and was inadequate there, is much more inadequate as Hugh, quite pallid. But Albert Finney as the Consul and Jacqueline Bisset as Yvonne are superb. When I read that Finney had been signed, I was afraid that he might be too beefy, too much a mere drunk instead of (in Walter Allen's words) a man "more in love with damnation than with being saved." In proof, Finney is magnificent: acute, deep, a creature of echoing caverns in which he tries to hide. Bisset, whose career hasn't matched her talent, immediately makes us believe that she is indeed the woman whom the Consul adores and needs; then she goes on to create movingly a woman in love with her husband who is trying to rescue him from his romance about her. The acting of Finney and Bisset is all that holds the picture together.

But they can't save the enterprise. This film of *Under the Volcano* diminishes it drastically, and, unlike the film of Malamud's much lesser work *The Natural* (discussed last week), such diminution can't be an acceptable substitute. Gallo and Huston were evidently motivated by reverence for Lowry's book and a wish to serve it cinematically as best they could, despite its manifest problems. But, sad to say, they have ended by proving what many have feared: this darkly lustrous novel cannot be filmed.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Monday on the Stage with Steve

In the halcyon days of Gershwin, Porter, and Rodgers and Hart, Broadway musicals used to be about music. Beginning with *Oklahoma*, and culminating with *My Fair Lady*, Broadway musicals usually featured the book. *Sunday in the Park with George*, a new work by James Lapine (book and direction) and Stephen Sondheim (music and lyrics), is the first Broadway musical that is mainly about the set.

Sunday in the Park with George
by James Lapine

This show has a very good set—indeed, a brilliant one—by Tony Straiges—and since the design is primarily intended as a stage canvas for the reproduction (substituting costumed actors for the original figures) of the large pointillist painting "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of the Grande Jatte" by Georges Seurat, one could sit and look at it for hours. This, in fact, is precisely what the audience finds itself doing at the Booth Theater. A popular joke about heavyweight musicals was that you came out of the theater humming the costumes. Stephen Sondheim's score is designed to send you out of the theater singing the set.

And it would were the music just a little more tuneful. Sondheim, once again frowning on melody, is here composing in a minimalist, vaguely serial style which functions primarily as a setting for his surprising, often witty lyrics. This disdain for melody, coupled with a certain emotional coldness and remoteness, explains, I think, why so many Sondheim musicals have a large following but not a large audience. *Sunday in the Park with George*, I suspect, will share that fate. The idea is original—to bring the advanced techniques of such works as the Wilson-Glass *Einstein on the Beach* into the commercial mainstream—but although the evening is packed with succulent ocular feasts and crammed with vibrant theatrical images, the show is ultimately wearisome, even a little silly.

The problem, as usual, is in the book—what book there is. *Sunday in the Park with George* begins in the park where the artist (Mandy Patinkin) is sketching his model (Bernadette Peters), as the future characters of his painting wander among the trees. The model is named Dot—a reference, no doubt, to Seurat's pointillist method. George is her lover, and all she wants him to do is look at her. This he steadfastly refuses to do unless he is painting her figure, and since he is always painting someone's figure, she can't command his attention long enough to engage her in argument or even to take her to the Follies. Soon he gets her pregnant, doubtless without looking at her, yet continues to keep his eyes glued to his canvas. He refuses, in fact, even to look at his own daughter after the baby is born, complaining that mother and child are blocking his light. Unsurprisingly, Dot soon takes up with someone, a baker, more responsive to

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her personal charms ("In bed, George—I mean he kneads me—like bread, George"), while George proceeds to use her, the baker, and the baby as additional figures in his grand design.

We are familiar with stories of artists—Gauguin is the most famous—who sacrificed family, love, and personal relationships for the sake of their art, but whereas Bernard Shaw was able to provide this nineteenth-century theme with some philosophical relevance as a deadly struggle between the artist-man and the mother-woman, *Sunday in the Park with George* reduces the whole issue to a trivial domestic squabble, similar to a wife complaining that her husband would rather watch TV than fill her in on what happened that day at the office. Still, George's passion for "color, design, tension, balance, composition, life, light, and harmony" does have a certain relentless urgency, and the first act climax, when human figures, trees, sailboats, cutout dogs, and a humpbacked monkey, come together to simulate the completed canvas, is a stunning *coup de théatre*.

There is a second act—unfortunately, since it seems to be an afterthought. Taking place in modern times, it begins in an American art museum where another artist named George, the great-grandson of Seurat and Dot, is paying homage to his distinguished ancestor through the medium of a technological display called a Chromolume. A combination of laser light, moving images, and slide projections emanating from a huge domed machine, this is a dazzling sound and light show designed by the ingenious Bran Ferren. George is criticized by various people for wasting his talents on such marginal artistic pursuits ("light shows," says one critic, "are getting to be more and more about less and less"), but it remains for Dot's daughter—George's grandmother—a benevolent, forgetful old lady in a wheelchair, to identify "children and art" as the only worthwhile memorials. While the museum crowd inanely chatters away ("What's a little cocktail conversation/If it's going to get you your foundation"), George withdraws from these human encounters by sending up photographic cutouts as surrogates of himself to pretend interest in these banal conversations—another aloof artist, cold and alienated, shrugging off fashionable armies of superficial bores.

In the last scene, George has gone to the island park where Seurat created his masterpiece. Another Straiges stroke, it is surrounded now by high-rise modern buildings; only one tree and a portion of grass remain from the original vernal scene. Filled with yearning and nostalgia, utterly melancholy, utterly alone, George encounters the figure of Dot, his great-grandmother, holding her umbrella, while the painting slowly reconstitutes itself on stage for the finale.

Sondheim and Lapine have returned to their original image because that image is the essence of the work; the rest is landfill. Having developed an exquisite idea, and possessed with the theatrical resources to realize it, they somehow lacked the ultimate resolve to let it find a natural shape, molding it instead to routine conventional forms—a case of the imagination trying to do the work of the will. Without the second act, and without the modest but foolish plot, *Sunday in the Park with George* might have been a genuine breakthrough in American musical theater. At the moment, it seems more like an effort to adapt the insights of serious art to the entertainment needs of popular audiences.

THE PRODUCTION is subject to the same compromises. Offering magnificent visual opportunities, fascinating when it ruminates on color and line, the book suffers nevertheless from sketchily written scenes and slick dramatic caricatures, particularly a fat American couple from the Deep South who wander through the park gorging on pastries and insulting the French. Bernadette Peters, with her lovely pout and soft chin, always maintains a robust energy and charm, and Dana Ivey, as the unappreciated wife of a competing artist, contributes another of her edged portraits of an elegant complicated snob. But the men tend to speak in those stentorian sonorities left over from old-fashioned musical comedy, where the execution of the dialogue is often indistinguishable from the rendering of the songs. Even the gifted Mandy Patinkin (bearded as Seurat, clean-shaven as his great-grandson), though always intense and concentrated, suffers from excessive emotional reserve, occasional inaudibility, and those curious chest and throat tones associated with such professional tenors as Alfred Drake.

Forced to a judgment, I would like to find some way to express my admiration for this effort, so unique in a musical theater dominated by the noisy displays of *Dreamgirls*, *Cats*, and *La Cage aux Folles*, along with my disappointment over how the achievement of such talented people is sometimes compromised by a certain facileness and slickness. I suspect that if *Sunday in the Park with George* had been a short musical piece exclusively concerned with the execution of a painting on stage, it would have been a masterpiece. In its present inflated form, it is merely a handsome, pleasing, if occasionally meretricious entertainment.

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He thinks like a mystic but acts like a lawyer.

INSIDE KHOMEINI'S MIND

BY ERNEST GELLNER

During evacuation, one must not squat facing the sun or the moon, unless one's genitals are covered.

During sexual intercourse, if the penis enters a woman's vagina or a man's anus, fully or only as far as the circumcision ring, both partners become impure . . . , they must consequently perform their ablutions.

If one commits an act of sodomy with a cow, a ewe, or a camel, their urine and their excrements become impure, and even their milk may no longer be consumed.

The Islamic movement met its first saboteur in the Jewish people, who are at the source of all the anti-Islamic libels and intrigues current today.

It is not strictly forbidden for Muslims to work for a concern managed by a Muslim which also employs Jews, provided the work does not serve Israel in any manner whatsoever. However, it is shameful to do one's work under the orders of a Jewish foreman.

Misdeeds must be punished by the law of retaliation: cut off the hands of the thief; kill the murderer instead of putting him in prison; flog the adulterous woman or man . . . any judge fulfilling the seven requirements (that he have reached puberty, be a believer, know the Koranic laws perfectly, be just, and not be affected by amnesia, or be a bastard, or be of the female sex) is qualified to dispense justice. . . .

THESE quotations came from a volume called *Sayings of the Ayatollah Khomeini*. The purpose of this particular *Little Green Book*, as it describes itself, is not primarily scholarly. Rather, it is to supply the public with a sample of the range and nature (extraordinary by contemporary Western standards) of Khomeini's ideas. In this it succeeds. Apart from the theo-porn and the coarse savagery and the visceral anti-Semitism, however, it also contains material which illuminates the central intuitions, inspirations, and tensions of Khomeini's thought. A reader puzzled by why a theologian should pontificate about the precise fate reserved for a sodomized camel, or the attitude of a believer while urinating, will also be led to the theocratic nature of this system, a nomocratic one, that is, ruled according to a body of law. "Islam has precepts for everything which concerns man and society. There is no subject upon which Islam has not expressed its judgment."

The type of casuistry practiced by Khomeini is not idiosyncratic, but part of the duties traditionally expected of the members of the clerisy to which he belongs. The reader will note the distinctive separation of powers inherent in Islam:

> The Sacred Legislation of Islam is the sole legislative power. No one has the right to legislate and no law may be executed except the law of the Divine Legislation.

He might also, if perceptive, note some hints of the important inner tensions that pervade Shiism. On the one hand, legitimate power is attributed to the Imams only, distinct beings "infinitely gifted and by birth and nature superior to other men," so superior that even the Archangel Gabriel conceded that if he got too close to them he would be burned. On the other hand, it is attributed to scholars selected merely for learning, piety, and zeal. There is simultaneously an insistence that power be exclusively in the hands of the scholars (when the Imams are absent, which in Shiite theology they generally are), and a grudging recognition of secular rulers, who may exist independently of the clerics, as long as they respect the bounds of the law.

But these deep and enormously significant tensions are only sketchily present in the *Little Green Book*. Anyone wishing to explore the fascinating themes of Khomeini's thought more thoroughly must turn to the much more weighty *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini*. This volume constitutes a far more serious scholarly enterprise and provides more copious and thorough documentation. Though edited and translated by a reputable scholar, it is, however, also somewhat misleading and distorting.

The editor, Hamid Algar, is a convert to Islam, and an enthusiastic admirer of the man he calls *Imam* Khomeini. One must suppose that what attracts Algar to Khomeini is the man and his ideology in its entirety—in its enormity, one feels like saying. Valuable and interesting though Algar's edition of Khomeini is, it is open to the serious charge of distortion by omission and relative emphasis. Algar's foreword explains the sense in which Khomeini is referred to as *Imam*. The term has two meanings, so utterly disparate in their potency that one should really in all logic use subscripts, and refer to $Imam_1$ and $Imam_2$. $Imam_1$ is a Shiite notion of a being whose "spiritual stations . . . far transcend human comprehension," one who existed before the creation of the world in the form of a light beneath the divine throne, and who differs from the other men even in the sperm from which he grew. $Imam_2$ in the "common lexical meaning of the word" is simply "leader" or "guide." In a passage that reads as if nothing contentious were being insinuated, the editor admits that the term has been applied to Khomeini "in recent years" in recognition of the fact that "his role has been unique among the religious scholars of Iran and has exceeded what is implied in the title 'Ayatollah,' " but assures us that what is intended is $Imam_2$. Does Algar really expect us to believe that the average Iranian Shiite is aware and respectful of

Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini, edited and translated by Hamid Algar (Mizan Press, 460 pp., $8.95)

Sayings of the Ayatollah Khomeini: Political, Philosophical, Social, and Religious (The Little Green Book), edited by Tony Hendra, translated by Harold Salemson (Bantam, 125 pp., $2.25)

Ernest Gellner is the author of *Muslim Society* (Cambridge University Press). His *Nations and Nationalism* was recently published by Cornell University Press.

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such invisible subscripts, and that he does not, at the very least, extend the resonance of $Imam_1$ to $Imam_2$? Contemporary Iranians may not have explicitly claimed the Hidden Imamat for Khomeini, but the ambiguity is an essential part of the situation, and Algar's scholasticism at this point is not harmless. It obscures the true situation.

The most grave charge against Algar's edition is that, though the book does indeed give us marvelous material for understanding deep currents and stresses of Khomeini's thought, it refrains from telling the whole truth, and gives us a cleaned-up, expurgated, bowdlerized Khomeini. From this book one would not get the full feel for the heart and mind of the man who warmly endorses the liquidation of entire tribes if it furthers the welfare of the Muslim community (in modern conditions, tribes would clearly be replaced by nations); who favors flogging of adulterers; and who gives so much loving thought to the varieties of sweat, excrement, and penetration. Strangely enough, though a convert and an enthusiast, Algar retains enough familiarity with (and, apparently, respect for) Western values to select the elements of his portrait of Khomeini in such a way as to diminish his offensiveness to the Western reader.

In a curious way, I find this editing somewhat insulting to Khomeini. Whether or not one finds him appealing, there is something coherent, sincere, and elemental about him. It is not by accident that he brought off a staggering revolution against enormous material odds. To understand him, we need to see him as he is. The brutal moralism, the hair-splitting scholasticism, and the obsessive attention to bodily functions, are all part and parcel of the man's mind.

FROM ISLAM'S very inception, three main principles of legitimacy have co-existed (not always peaceably) within the Faith: scripturalism; sacred leadership; and consensus of the community, with special authority for its own learned members. The political conflicts of the very first generations of Muslims in effect concerned the priority or emphasis accorded to each of these principles—to the Revelation of the Divine Word, to the divine selection of the Messenger and subsequently of his Deputy, and to the inspired agreement of the illuminated community or at least of its learned and literate leaders. Roughly speaking, the partisans of divine selection became Shiites, the adherents of consensus became Kharejites, and Sunnism represents a compromise blend, stressing scripturalism and learned consensus, but in practice accommodating itself to some recognition of a special status to the Prophet's progeny.

Those early struggles eventually engendered (or at any rate provided the idiom for) the main sectarian fissures within Islam. Shiism is defined, basically, as giving priority to sacred leadership, certainly over consensus, and in some cases (though this certainly does not apply to Khomeini) even over Scripture. Further marked features of Shiism include a stress on martyrdom (at least one of the early divinely chosen rulers was killed by his enemies), on the bloody avenging of martyrdom, and on the legitimacy of dissimulation while living under invalid, albeit Muslim, rulers. While illegitimate rulers continue to govern, true authority rests in Imams endowed with absolute status and mystical properties, but who are mostly in hiding, incognito, in a state of "Occultation." Subsegments of Shiism, furthermore, are differentiated partly in

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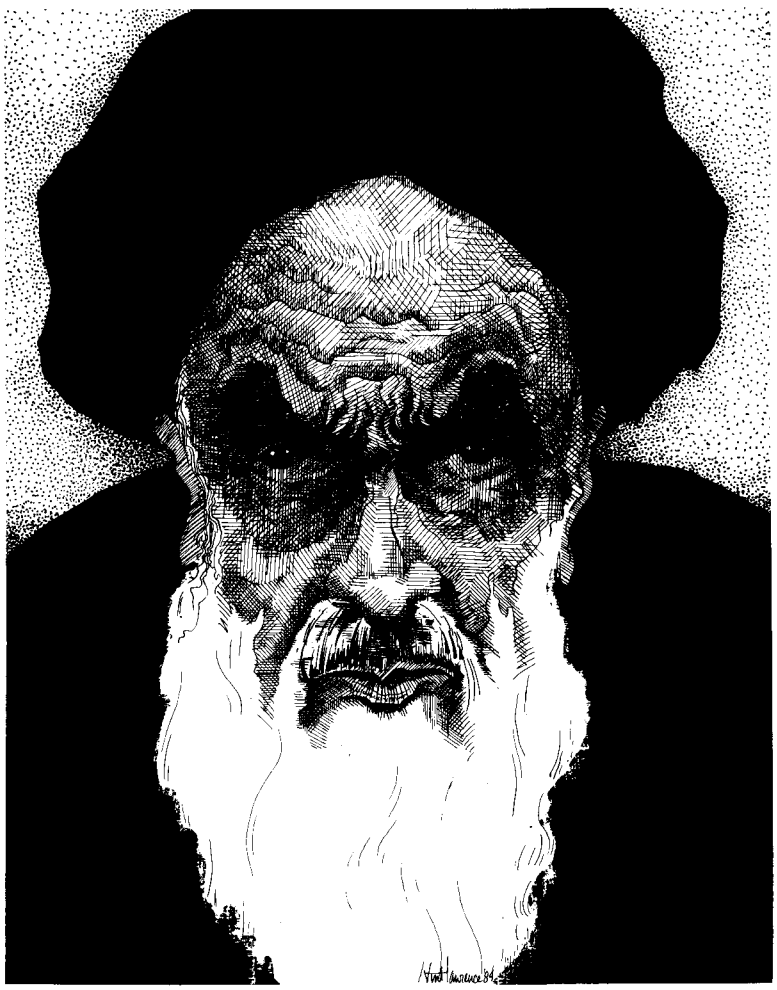
terms of when or whether the Occultation took place. Fivers, Seveners, and Twelvers Shiites differ concerning the precise generation at which the Imam went into hiding or hived off from the main Muslim community.

Shiism began as a religion of oppressed or disadvantaged segments of the community, revering a martyred and defeated ruler. In most places where it is to be found, it continues to be the religion of the underprivileged. Even more than Christianity, it is a religion of the politically dispossessed. Hence it faces theoretical difficulties when it attains power, though Shiites are not averse to acquiring it.

Iran is an exception in the Shiite world. Other Muslim countries are either overwhelmingly Sunnite, or contain Shiite minorities in a politically subordinate position. Since the sixteenth century, Shiism has become not merely the official, but also the defining, religion of the Persians. A non-Shiite Persian, like a non-Catholic Pole, or a non-Catholic Croat, is something of a contradiction.

What concerns us now, however, is not the Persian past, but the contemporary implications of the Shiite vision. These implications are deeply, inescapably, and persistently ambiguous. Various scholars such as Nicki Kedie, Yann Richard, Said Arjomand, Shabrough Akhari, A. H. Hairi, and others have all explored this. At the heart of Shiism there lies what can only be called a political mysticism and absolutism. The usual Muslim nomocracy is fused with messianism and complicated by the fact that the divine Messiah is in hiding.

Under the old order, when, at best, tribal uprisings—but not urban rebels—could overturn a government, the martyrdom cult in cities could provide an escape for the oppressed, but it was not political dynamite. Revolutions needed a tribal base, and the scholars who legitimated a rising had to content themselves with the role of counselers to tribal leaders. But under the prosperous conditions of modernization, the martyrdom cult, fueled by the resentment of the lesser beneficiaries of economic progress against the greater ones, does acquire explosive revolutionary potential. The great beneficiaries of oil wealth flouted it in ways that were inevitably counter-Islamic, and envy could easily present itself as piety and rectitude. The Shiite martyrdom cult, however, unlike the Christian one, is quite free of any pacifism; and unlike the Marxist one, the martyr is a concrete person, not an abstract class, which makes the symbol far more potent. Khomeini profited from all this.



KHOMEINI BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Like the rest of Islam, traditional Shiism sees the faith as inherently concerned with the regulation of all social life. Unlike the rest of Islam, it strives for the ultimate implementation of the divinely imposed social order not by ordinary men, selected merely for zeal and knowledge, but by (in effect) quasi-divine beings. This would lead to a crystal-clear political situation, if only these Imams were present and identifiable. All power to the Imams, you might then say, and there would then be no disputed legitimacy. But alas, the Imams may be and often are in hiding, and are known to have suffered even worse indignities:

> For we know that our Imams were sometimes subject to conditions which prevented them from pronouncing a true ordinance; they were exposed to tyrannical and oppressive rulers who imposed *taqiya* (dissimulation) and fear upon them.

A radiance too bright for Archangel Gabriel, and liable to scorch him if he came too close, was not bright enough to overawe the tyrants of this world. In these conditions, what is to be done? As Khomeini puts it:

> Now that no particular individual has been appointed by God . . . to assume the functions of government in the time of Occultation, what must be done? Are we to abandon Islam? Do we no longer need it? Was Islam valid for only two hundred years? Or is it that Islam has clarified our duties in other respects but not with respect to government?

There are a number of possibilities:

—Total passivity and withdrawal from an evil and illegitimate social order, while waiting for the return of the legitimate order.

—Grudging cooperation with the temporal power, provided it does not violate the divine order.

—Active support for the Shiite ruler, even though he is not *the* Imam.

—A formal and uncompromising affirmation of exclusive political guardianship for the religious scholars, during the persisting Occultation of the Imam, and a firm insistence on their duty to be politically active in bringing about a situation in which this guardianship is granted to them. This reduces any remaining political or military agencies into simple executors of the will of the

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legitimate clerisy, and declares any other form of government to be illegitimate. As Algar puts it in a footnote: ". . . in the absence of the Imam or an individual deputy named by him . . . the task [of government] devolved upon the *fuqaha* [clerics] as a class."

What Khomeini essentially has done, in the context of recent social and political developments in Iran, is take the last course, and espouse the guardianship of the clerisy, which he is in a position actually to put into effect. There is no question of Muslims, Shiites, or Iranians, or indeed Khomeini himself, having been permanent adherents of this position. They were not, most of the time. Not only the history of Islam, but also the history of Shiism, is overwhelmingly monarchical, when Shiism is not occupying an underdog position. Khomeini has in effect developed a new position, which combines Sunni Law-worship and this-worldliness with Shiite intransigence and absolutism, minus the Shiite tendency to abjure the present political world. The end result: a republic of the lawyer clerics.

IRONICALLY, it was the Shiite clerisy itself which pushed the late Shah's father to establish a monarchy, for fear of the alternative, a Kemal-type republic. It is only now that Khomeini has become unambiguously fundamentalist/republican, and declared monarchy to be non-Islamic. To what extent Khomeini passed through the other positions, and in what spirit he did so throughout the course of his intellectual and political development, is something which one hopes Algar's forthcoming biography will establish and document with accuracy.

In the present collection, for instance, Algar includes a speech that was delivered in a teaching center in Qum in 1963. It was indeed an unbelievably brave speech. Defiant and insolent though it was toward the Shah, however, it asks him only to mend his ways ("I don't want you to become like your father. Listen to my advice, listen to the scholars of Islam . . . don't listen to Israel . . . "). It does not suggest that he should abandon his position and dismantle the monarchy itself. Later some of Khomeini's remarks made, after the revolution, about popular validation of government did have a touch of Rousseau about them; they were reminiscent of Jean-Jacques's views about the suspension of popular sovereignty in England between elections—although of course the sovereign for Khomeini is the Divine rather than the General Will.

The basic moral intuition of mainstream Sunni Islam is the divinity of Law: unique, eternal, the uncreated Word of God. The obverse of this is the impermissibility, the sinfulness, of revering anything in this world as divine. Anthropolatry as well as idolatry are out. Orthodox Sunnism does admittedly make certain mild concessions in the direction of bestowing fiscal and political privileges on the (very numerous) progeny of the Prophet, but these relatively modest expressions of respect remain well this side of divinization. Shiism, by contrast, endows certain personalities with quasi-divine status.

Within the folk versions of both Sunni and Shiite Islam, sacredness has been widely diffused by its attribution to many petty saints, dead and alive. And within both traditions, this old proliferation of the sacred has been severely reduced of late, under the impact of a reform movement that benefits from changed social circumstances: the autonomous rural communities, which used and needed their petty saints as arbitrators or leaders, have themselves been much weakened by the greatly strengthened modern state. Within Shiism, however, anthropolatry has nevertheless remained at the center, applied to the key martyr figures, sanctioned by the high theology of the sect. Where Sunni Islam absolutizes Law, then, Shiite Islam absolutizes Law and certain Persons. It is thus a doubly absolutist faith. The essence of Khomeini's position is that the absolutization of Law has been stressed and emphasized to a point at which the sacred Imams, while by no means denied, became logically redundant. Sunnism is anomalous when Sunnis are deprived of political power; Shiism is anomalous when Shiites attain political power. Khomeini has found a way out of the anomaly, not in the old way, by accepting a monarchy, but by stressing the Sunni elements of the theology and reserving power for the clerisy, while waiting for the Imam.

Ironically, it is the Shiite *ulama*, or religious scholars, who have now at long last attained the great power which Law-worship should rightly confer on legal scholars—even though they, for whom only hidden Imams have a real and absolute legitimacy, have rather less claim to it. Logically, they can and do claim that power only as caretakers, as long as the Imam remains in hiding. (Or they may slide close to the blasphemy of claiming the Imam as one of their own number.) Concretely, they were able to seize power because the martrydom myths associated with the Imams turned out to be outstandingly effective in mobilizing masses for the ultimate sacrifice on a massive scale, thereby making revolution possible. There is a further irony in the fact that the Shiite *ulama* were only able to do this just when the content of the theology was moving toward Sunnism, when Divine Law was receiving rather more stress than Divine Persons. The paradox is easily explained. The remaining Shiite elements were crucial for revolutionary ardor and sacrifice, whereas the Sunni strain provides them with legitimation and content once power has been attained, and was well adapted both to the absence of the Imam and to various distinctively modern traits of its own world.

AMONG THE pre-industrial world religions, Islam stands out as the one that has retained a unique political hold over both masses and elites. This is true of Islam in general, and not only of Shiism. But the Iranian revolution cannot simply be explained as one further example of this remarkable power. The reason why reformed Islam is so influential of late is that it has certain conspicuous traits—strict unitarianism, sobriety, orderliness, scripturalism, egalitarianism—which are consonant with the organizational and ideological requirements of an industrializing age. Faced with the predicament of backwardness, Muslims are not forced, as others are, into the painful dilemma of either emulating the colonialist enemy and thereby disavowing their own tradition and identity, or inventing a populist countertradition. Instead, they can turn to an old local tradition in the high culture of Islam. But Shiism, in which the cult of personality is proportionately stronger, and the cult of divine nomocracy correspondingly weaker, fits this model much less well than does mainstream Sunni Islam. Why then did it, in the end, perform so brilliantly, as a catalyst and mobilizing agent?

The explanation falls into two parts. One relates to Shiism as such, and the other to the form of it represented and eventually led by Khomeini. The cult of personality and martyrdom inherent in

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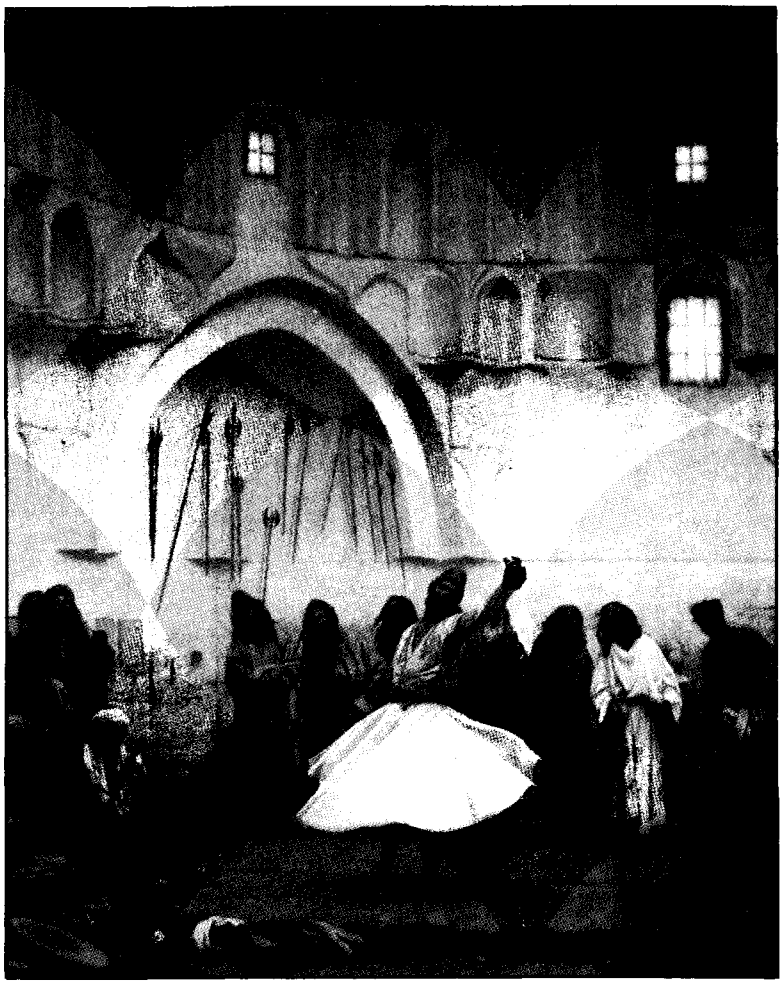
Shiism causes its scholars (or some of them) to retain more effective links with the masses than is the case with Sunni clerics. Shiite *ulama* are not merely experts on the Law, on how to dispose of a sodomized camel; they are also, and in equal measure, expertly professional and eternally evocative biographers of the Founder-Martyr, memoirists of a personal model.

Not only in words and texts, but in vivid and intense annual passion plays, they speak in an idiom far more rousing and moving than mere preoccupations with the niceties of the law can ever be, even when related to intimate physiological functions. Moreover, the ever-reactivated memory of Martyrdom is accompanied by an equally vivid and quite unambiguous, emphatic message—that the Martyrdom ought and must be bloodily avenged, and that the tyrant may well himself be a Muslim. The great ambivalence about the temporal power, which is stronger and deeper in Shiism than in Sunnism, makes it more logical for Shiite scholars to be cast, and to cast themselves, in the role of revolutionary leadership.

But the other part of the answer is to be sought in the particular development represented by Khomeini, and is very well documented by Algar's collection of his writings. It has already been said that Khomeini is the most Sunni of Shiite theologians. One may go further and say that he is a positively Kharejite Shiite, emphasizing the consensus of the community. This was once a paradox, but now time has given it proof. The egalitarianism-republicanism, the scripturalist nomocracy, is in the end pushed very far indeed by Khomeini. In traditional Shiism, the nomocracy is merely a kind of provisional government, at best an interim caretaker authority, legitimate while mankind awaits the end of Occultation and the return of the Hidden Imam. But not for Khomeini: the Law must be upheld at all times, and in identical form, style, and with undiminished severity, Occultation or no Occultation. Let justice be done though the heavens fall. Or rather, let justice be done, without worrying about whether the Imam be present or absent. And justice means implementing an unchanging Law.

If the Imam chooses to return from Occultation, or hasn't yet departed for it, then he simply doubles up as mystical and absolute Imam *and* Scholar/Law Enforcer. It is all a kind of contingent personal union, however, a merely historical superimposition of one role upon another. The two roles have no inherent or necessary connection with each other.

> The authority that the Prophet and the Imam had in establishing a government . . . exists also for the *faqih* [lawyer/theologian].
>
> The Imam does indeed possess certain spiritual dimensions that are unconnected with his function as a ruler.



THE WHIRLING DERVISHES BY JEAN-LÉON GÉRÔME c. 1895
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The replacement of the basic political intuition of Shiism—of a sacred, quasi-divine personal ruler—by that of the other ideological pole within Islam, the orderly imposition of an eternal Divine Law by *anyone*, whether quasi-divine or merely learned and pious, could hardly be clearer or more explicit. Government, the implementation of eternal Divine Law, is what it is, and not another thing. Should it happen to coincide with another thing, a near-divine incarnation, then that is a conflation of two distinct things; but it does not really modify the essence of either. This is Sunnism hidden under the Shiite cloak. In one sense, government is devalued by this argument. Governing is a necessary chore, and not to be valued in itself:

> Rule and command, then, are in themselves only a means . . .
>
> It is the duty of the Imams and the just *fuqaha* [clerics] to use government institutions to execute Divine Law. . . . Government in itself represents nothing but pain and trouble for them, but what are they to do?

If there is anyone still foolish enough to believe, then, that there is an inherent connection between the special mystical state of the Imams and government, let them be disabused: ". . . Fatima also possessed these states, even though she was not a ruler, a judge, or a governor." The mystical status of the Prophet's daughter is not in dispute; but obviously no one in his senses could ever suppose that a woman might rule. This proof of the analytic separability of political authority and mystical standing, so close to traditional Shiite sentiment, could hardly be more conclusive.

Khomeini's theology, in other words, though Shiite in name and in some of its substance, nevertheless does not constitute a counterexample to the general trend observable in Islam

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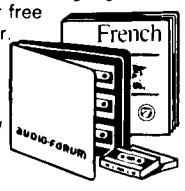

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of the past hundred years: the overall shift toward a symmetrical, egalitarian, rule-oriented, scripturalist, anti-mediationist, and anti-ecstatic pole of the faith.

AT THE END of Algar's volume there is also a set of Khomeini's philosophical/mystical writings, as distinct from his political ones. (One ought not to call them theological, since in this system theology embraces politics and philosophy equally.) These are of very considerable interest and merit. They show us another aspect of Khomeini, as coherent and passionate as the man devoted to the maintenance of severe and undiminished punishment—Imam or no Imam—or deeply preoccupied with the minute governance of physiological functions. Here we find a philosopher/mystic of great force, within whose thought rational and transrational appeals are fused in a convincing, profoundly felt, and powerfully expressed whole.

There are echoes of St. Anselm and of Descartes and of Neoplatonism in Khomeini's proofs of the existence of God. Both the ontological and the cosmological proofs of the existence of God are invoked. Specialists in the history of Muslim philosophy may tell us which way and at which time the ideas traveled, or whether perhaps there is a case of parallel development. Consider a passage such as the following:

> . . . God is a being that is infinite, that possesses the attributes of perfection to an infinite degree, and that is subject to no limitation. A being that is unlimited in this manner cannot be contingent. . . . If there is no limitation in the existence of a thing, then, reason dictates that it cannot be other than the absolute and necessary being . . .

This is combined with a negative or deficiency theory of evil (and thus a solution of the problem of evil) which is reminiscent of Spinoza.

> . . . all things that exist have two aspects: an aspect of existence and an aspect of deficiency. The aspect of existence is light: it is free from all deficiency and pertains to God. The other aspect, the negative aspect or that of deficiency, pertains to us. Now no one can praise the negative: it is only the affirmative—existence and perfection—that can be praised. There is only one perfection in the world and that is God, and there is only one beauty and that is God. We must understand this, and understand it with our heart.

From this Khomeini derives, quite legitimately, and explicitly, the doctrine that God possesses the monopoly of all true praise:

> You imagine that you are praising someone's handwriting, but in reality you are praising God.

(It is hard not to reflect that, if only one combines Khomeini's theodicy with his politics, it is easy to establish a cogent proof of the nonexistence of both Israel and of the United States; and there can also be no doubt but that the Imam would also enforce those nonexistences in a more concrete and empirical sense, had he the power.)

But the rationalistic elements are integrally fused with a kind of characteristically Muslim semantic mysticism:

> A name is a sign. Names are given to people and assigned to things in order to provide them with a sign by which they can be recognized. . . . The names of God are also signs, signs of His Sacred Essence; and it is only His names that are knowable to man. The essence itself is something that lies totally beyond the reach of man, and even the Seal of the Prophets, the most knowledgeable and noble of men, was unable to attain the knowledge of the Essence. The Sacred Essence is unknown to all but Itself. It is the names of God that are accessible to man.

> The whole world is a name of God, for a name is a sign, and all the creatures that exist in the world are signs of the Sacred Essence of God Almighty. Here some people may reach a profound understanding of what is meant by "signs," while others may grasp only the general meaning that no creature comes into existence by itself.

This theology and mysticism contains a deep tension that is strikingly parallel to a strain that also pervades the concrete social life of Islam. The firm insistence on the absolute transcendence of the deity makes it unutterably blasphemous to claim identification with God. At the very same time, however, the absolutist claims made for the deity inescapably tend, as these passages illustrate, to turn everything in the world into "signs," emanations, aspects of the deity.

The concrete socio-religious life of Muslim communities was traditionally pervaded by a similar conflict between a severe scripturalist transcendentalism, sustained by the literate scholars, and a pursuit of divine refractions or emanations in the world, represented characteristically by the "saints," the der-

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vishes and the marabouts. The need for these refractions was not simply a consequence of the ambivalence inherent in the theology. It also had far more mundane bases. Ill-governed communities needed leaders and mediators; in the tribal worlds in particular there was no room for scholarship, but a great need for living ecstatic saints, who mediated between social groups in the name of mediating between men and God.

Yet reverence for anything other than God constitutes the sin of *shirk* (though if Khomeini's argument about the automatic divine monopoly of all praise is correct, it becomes impossible to commit *shirk*, however hard one tries: one's praise rises up to God, even if misguidedly directed elsewhere). At the very heart of the great reformation which Islam has undergone in the last hundred years, there is a sustained attack on *shirk* and on the religious brokers. Khomeini clearly is part of this movement, notwithstanding his Shiism:

> The social environment created by . . . *shirk* invariably brings about corruption such as you can now observe in Iran, the corruption termed "corruption on earth." This corruption must be swept away, and its instigators punished for their deeds.

Yet ironically the Shiite themes that (at least to an outsider) seemed tainted by *shirk*--the anthropolatrous attitude toward the Imams and martyrs--were precisely what helped Khomeini to bring about the staggering revolution that now endeavors to extirpate *shirk*. The deep tension is there, both in the vision and in the social order.

In the end, it seems clear that the theological revolutionary, the ruthlessly brutal moralist and politician, the scholastic and implacable Solon of bathroom etiquette, and the forceful mystic and thinker, are one and the same coherent person. He reflects the deepest currents and strains of the society that has engendered him, and that he now dominates.

THE RETURN TO THE NATIVE

An American Procession by Alfred Kazin

(Knopf, 408 pp., $18.95)

So perplexed am I, as a furtively aligned poet and an ostentatiously formalist critic of poetry, by the chinks in Mr. Kazin's armor, by the rifts in his lute—why does he disregard Conrad Aiken, Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom, William Carlos Williams, dismiss Stevens and disdain Frost, all of whom had achieved a characteristic if not a crowning expression by 1930, his cut-off date?—that I had better declare right off, as a reader, that this book has a richness, a ripeness, a rightness, which transcends anything to be found in all of Alfred Kazin's other criticism. Such wisdom, though, such (often despairing) enlightenment, is arrived at of course by treading once again those native grounds, rehearsing, wonderfully citing, as for a class of exceptionally fervent graduate students, till the whole process of Kazin's eloquent prose, a moving procession indeed, if most often a dead march in the nature of the case, turns luminous, like a huge apartment house after dark.

Evidently some of the windows are brighter than others—Pound's, curiously, more vivid than Eliot's, Henry Adams's more suggestive than Henry James's. And some of the flats are not entirely inhabited by the names on the lease: as Ruskin reminds, we must at least be sure that we go to the author to get at his—or in the case of Gertrude Stein, at her—meaning, not to find ours. Yet even here, Kazin amazes. After all, we can discover what he thinks of the unmentioned Willa Cather, or what he used to think of her forty-two years back, by reading in *On Native Grounds*:

> Her characters no longer—after the climax in her career, which came with two short novels she published between 1923 and 1925, *A Lost Lady* and *The Professor's House*—had to submit to failure; they lived in a charming and almost antediluvian

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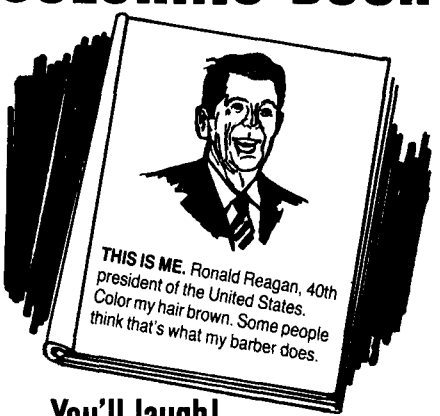
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> world of their own. They had withdrawn, as Willa Cather then withdrew; and if her world became increasingly recollective and abstract, it was because she had fought a losing battle that no one of her spirit could hope to win. It was a long way from the Catholic Bohemian farmers of Nebraska to the eighteenth-century Catholicism of the Southwest, but she had made her choice, and she accepted it with an almost haughty serenity.

We can even counter (and correct?) what Kazin thought by quoting what the (also uninspected) Wallace Stevens wrote to a friend in Ceylon about her in 1940:

> Miss Cather is rather a specialty. You may not like the book; moreover, you may think she is more or less formless. Nevertheless, we have nothing better than she is. She takes so much pains to conceal her sophistication that it is easy to miss her quality. But *Sapphira* will take you far away from Ceylon.

Regardless of the overlookings, the underminings—of Parkman, say, and of Poe—the amazement in here, for me, is in the renewal of Kazin's critical energy. Perhaps this is what is meant by the expression *second wind*. For Kazin's consideration of poetry, especially here in the intricate case of Dickinson, but also in those of Whitman and of Pound, has never been so expert, so impassioned. If this is the consequence of Kazin's claim that "in the course of more than twenty years I have been constantly stimulated by rethinking and recasting my early efforts," I can only hope that all of us who write about literature will similarly brood and narcissistically polish and deepen our visions.

There is a condensation, which in Kazin's case means a clarity, in these essays, which runs oddly counter to their general conversational tone. If, as *The New York Times* reviewer remarked, we seem to hear the same anecdotes more than once, such recurrences have a structural import: there are figures, there are encounters, there are stories about people which have assumed symbolic dimensions for Kazin, and he uses them as transitional modes. Clover Adams and Margaret Fuller turn up in many essays, and serve as a structural device—in the biographical overtones Kazin is so acute at picking up—to get from Emerson to James, from Hawthorne to Faulkner; they are joints. This is criticism which has not had to jettison history in order to make its points—which realizes, rather, that points are nothing unless they can be joined into a design. Kazin's marchers in the procession are giants in time, and he is learned enough to be humble about where to go for that dimension; he goes outside of mere literature on occasion, returning with the spoils to enrich his inspection of the texts:

> James was identified with the new market for fiction. . . . The modern system of royalty payments took hold about 1880. The cost of printing fell with the introduction of machine-made pulp paper, the rotary press, steam power, and the linotype machine. National magazines bid eagerly for the rights to new fiction when James was popular on both sides of the Atlantic. Even in Russia the fiction vogue forced novelists to start serializing their novels before they had thought them all out. . . .

AND PERHAPS the most abiding of these forays into "forces and factors" (though of course Alfred Kazin is never so silly as to entertain such language or such concepts), the strongest insight into the powers which enter into literature from elsewhere, is the constant adumbration of the War Between the States as the decisive event which altered the American literary enterprise for good, and certainly for evil. I think it is because Kazin has so closely realized the impact of the last three wars upon us Americans, and upon our culture—so pervasive that the wars sometimes seem to have *become* the culture—that he is now particularly responsive to the Civil War in the literature of this country. We anticipate such a response in any account of Whitman, but who could see how to "find" it in Dickinson as Kazin has:

> Dickinson could not limit death to a "law"—or "praise" it, as Whitman did, because it was "fathomless." Living with death as a great event in her life, hearing of death every day in that Civil War year that saw her write more poems than there were days, she lived intimately with death, as people used to do in the nineteenth century. It was not something you could omit from the day's register. . . .

Of course death becomes the phenomenological measure of all the writers in this book—Thoreau to Eliot—because Kazin is so concerned to predicate them as what Melville called *isolatos*, idiosyncratic and apart. In such an

COUPLET

Old Timer's Day, Fenway Park, 1 May 1982

When the tall puffy
figure wearing number
nine starts
late for the fly ball,
laboring forward
like a lame truckhorse
startled by a gartersnake,
—this old fellow
whose body we remember
as sleek and nervous
as a filly's—

and barely catches it
in his glove's
tip, we rise
and applaud weeping:
On a green field
we observe the ruin
of even the bravest
body, as Odysseus
wept to glimpse
among shades the shadow
of Achilles.

DONALD HALL

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undertaking, death is the identifying seal, not an irrelevance and certainly not a termination. "Herman has taken to writing poetry," wrote Mrs. Melville to Mrs. Hawthorne in 1859, "you need not tell anyone, for you know how such things get around." That is the mortuary touch, the isolating impulse which Kazin traces from Thoreau to Hemingway. Even those moments of connection, such as Melville's dedication of *Moby Dick* to Hawthorne, are seen as countermined by absence and solitude:

> The reader is caught up by these different sides of Melville—the androgyny that American writing suffers in respect to American power. Ishmael constantly reports Ahab but never seems to meet him. There is no confrontation between the daemonic father and the lost son. There will be none between Captain Vere and Billy in *Billy Budd*, where Isaac *praises* his father Abraham for loving the law more than he loves his son. If there is a father, he is a disaster to Melville; yet Melville's despairing sense of "God" is that "God-like" minds are without a God. So his love and adoration for Hawthorne ended in the suspicion that he was writing to a father figure who was not really there.

An American Procession is not, and its title makes that clear, a theory of American literature. It is not an identification of a single strand of American consciousness like Quentin Anderson's *The Imperial Self* of 1971, the most urgent in a series of such diagnoses which comprehends even wilder ones by Lawrence and Santayana (though Santayana's wildness is concealed by the imperturbable amenity of his prose, and Lawrence's wisdom disserved by the confabulatory screeches of his). As an interpreter, Alfred Kazin has a different kind of justice to mete out: he is distributive, and his metropolitan judgments accommodate repetition, even a degree of regression—the procession moves in several directions at once. Thoreau pops up in the Dickinson essay, Emerson is pervasive in Fitzgerald, Hawthorne and Poe in Faulkner of course, and Lincoln finds his account in Hawthorne and James as well as in the expected Whitman, "the only major writer to describe him with love."

There is a kind of murmurous, burrowing, circular attention paid here, a hovering over his cause, which brings Alfred Kazin, even more than his mentor Edmund Wilson, closer than any American critic has come to Sainte-Beuve—not to the gossipy, malicious "oncle Beuve," but to the great creator of structures, the author of *Port-Royal*. Like *Port-Royal*, which is also an interpretation of a "crucial century," *An American Procession* is not, then, a theory of literature, nor is it quite a literary history. It is a sustained meditation on the pursuit of an absolute and the failure of that pursuit. It is generously inclusive of the insights of other critics; Edel and Kenner, for instance, are invoked as necessary psychopomps into the James country and the Pound era, with a certain wry resignation. After all, being "modernist," for Kazin, signifies not only certain enormous repudiations but also an awareness that a reader's confidence is "something that has to be given by a critic."

While Emerson said that "every new writer is only a new crater of an old volcano," he clouded the issue by that adverb. It has been Alfred Kazin's study, much rehearsed and thereby consummated, to explain the nature of this volcanic soil, to reveal what "only" can mean in this instance. The *Procession* is wonderfully exciting to read, and perhaps the richer for its puzzling neglects; it is an authentic entrance, as Whitman called the self, to all facts.

RICHARD HOWARD

Richard Howard, whose most recent volume of poems, *Lining Up*, was just published by Atheneum, is working on a study of André Gide.

PAGING MR. X

The Making of America's Soviet Policy
edited by Joseph S. Nye Jr.

(Yale University Press, 416 pp., $27.50)

Relations with the Soviet Union are very bad. Some say they are the worst in memory. Few observers expect much change, at least not until after our elections. The pessimists are persuaded that any improvement will be slow and uncertain if Ronald Reagan is reelected and some even doubt that a change in Administrations would lead to early progress with Moscow, so deep is the division between the two superpowers. How have we reached this sorry state, and what should we do about it? As usual, the explanations fall into two categories: it is our fault (meaning Ronald Reagan's), or it is their fault. There are endless variants on these themes. Everything would be all right if only we had not put missiles into Europe, if only we had not started a new strategic arms race, if only we had not talked so tough. Or, conversely, everything would improve if it had not been for the Korean airline disaster, if the Soviets had a real leader who could make decisions, if the Soviets would pull out of Afghanistan or quit meddling in Central America. And so on.

It is over forty years since we became wartime allies with the Soviet Union, and we are still perplexed about their intentions. The Soviets remain, in Churchill's famous phrase, a mystery. Unfortunately we spend too much time psychoanalyzing the Russians, and too little deciding what to do about them. This book of essays, edited for the Council on Foreign Relations by Professor Joseph Nye of Harvard, acknowledges that the Soviet Union remains something of a "black box," from which only occasional pinpoints of light emanate. Strobe Talbott, in an excellent chapter, adds that because of our pluralism and their opacity, we have never been able to figure out who it is we are up against; our image of Russians has flickered "like an inkblot in a Rorschach test." But the book is not limited to analysis of the Soviet Union. Rather it has diagnoses and prescriptions for our own policy; it dissects the process, examines the components, and tries to answer the general accusation that American policy is erratic and incoherent.

This book joins a growing literature of intelligent reporting and analysis, most recently from foreign correspondents (Smith, Kaiser, Klose, Shipler, Binyon, Pond, and others). The individual chapters display a broad erudition concerning both American policy and Soviet affairs. Indeed, the historical chapters by Ernst May on the cold war,

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Stanley Hoffmann on détente, and Samuel Huntington on "renewed hostility," are all outstanding. Each contributes a serious, sophisticated, sustained analysis of U.S.-Soviet relations. Hoffmann argues for more modest American aims in defining relations with Moscow, as a means for moderating inevitable competition. Huntington concludes that both Kissinger and Carter tried a balanced, middle-of-the-road course, and both failed. He suggests that a middle-of-the-road policy requires great educational efforts to ensure continuing public support, because the volatility of American opinion drives policy either toward bellicosity or appeasement. Considering the current situation, public opinion will operate to exert pressure on the more extreme Reagan rhetoric; thus the Administration is pressed toward moderation. Huntington concludes that it requires political leadership of "unusual insight and skill" to channel the various public pressures to serve the national interest.

Echoing this judgment, all of the authors point toward a central conclusion that the American policy-making process is flawed. As a nation, we are constitutionally not equipped for devising long-term policies. Our political system almost guarantees tension between the Congress and the White House, and foreign policy is not an exception. Public opinion exerts a growing influence. Shifts in opinion are becoming more frequent and the fluctuations are wider; for example, William Schneider observes two contradictory current trends, declining support for defense spending and increasing hostility toward the U.S.S.R.

But there is more to it. Joseph Nye argues that despite oscillations between hostility and détente, American policy has done rather well. Relations are more stable than they seem. Richard Betts, in his chapter on nuclear competition, also suggests that the existence of nuclear weapons has stabilized a relationship that might otherwise have ended in a violent clash. Knowledge of the destruction that could be inflicted by nuclear weapons sets a limit on the deterioration in relations. Still, nuclear weapons also create an unusual turbulence. Neither side will be satisfied that its deterrence is fully effective; thus both will be constantly working to improve their positions. The result of this interaction is both "stabilizing and unsettling." A related point is made by Alexander George: both sides are adept at crisis management, but inept at crisis prevention. He cites instances of both drawn from his excellent larger study on the same subject. The two powers seem unable to grasp a budding crisis, to act in time, or effectively enough to avoid significant damage. More broadly, George asks whether it is realistic to expect of American foreign policy that it prevent any further extension of Soviet influence. He asserts that what American policy can hope for is to compete more effectively where it can, to limit the expansion of Soviet influence "in areas of high interest," and to induce Soviet leaders "to moderate their behavior."

IN SHORT, these various writers seem to agree that our problem may simply be whether we can manage an essentially adversarial relationship. The book suggests that basic changes are not to be expected, because of geography, history, and ideology, but the relationship could be a more constructive one if properly managed. This theme is the strong finale sounded by Professor Nye in his concluding chapter.

Management, of course, embraces a great deal: more moderate expectations, more effective individual policies, greater cooperation between the Executive and the Congress—in short, a strategy. This is surely sound, and especially so in an era where some increasingly nutty ideas seem to filter to the top. It is good advice. Yet one is uneasy. The reason is simple. Every Administration has tried, or believes it has tried, to "manage" the relationship. Containment, after all, was management, and so was détente. Management was the main theme of the Nixon period. It was the Soviet Union's emergence as an equal superpower that we needed to manage. (The Soviets themselves deeply resent the terminology because it suggests they are a kind of wild beast that needs taming.) Managing is preferable to confronting and a more positive aspiration than merely containing Soviet power.

Yet how much confidence can there be in a policy that entrusts so much to history? Détente and containment were predicated on encouraging or in-

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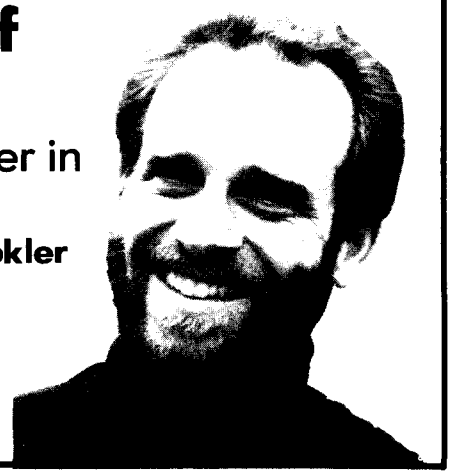

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ducing significant internal change in the Soviet Union. A managed relationship, though more modest, also still assumes changes inside the Soviet Union that will temper and moderate its foreign policy. History may well be on the side of this assumption; most revolutionary societies end near the political center, or even on the right. The Soviet Union is no exception. It is far from what Trotsky and Lenin imagined. Still, many Sovietologists in this country are increasingly skeptical of the prospects for internal change in any near term. The major Soviet changes have not, in fact, been evolutionary, but catalytic. Destalinization was an upheaval for which we were unprepared; as was the Cuban missile crisis; as was the overthrow of Khrushchev. Waiting for evolutionary change may turn out to be a frustrating strategy that could produce disillusions and further oscillations in American policy. And inducing change may be equally feckless. So the disconnection between policy prescriptions and prognosis may not really be repaired by better management.

The time has come for a complete review of American policy toward the Soviet Union. In the current situation we are nearly obsessed with unmasking the latest Soviet gambit. Tactics dominate. Strategy has virtually disappeared. Platitudes substitute for policy. Despite occasional forays (Project Democracy) we are excessively defensive. We seem content, even smug, when some Soviet thrust is parried. As a consequence, we have rarely thought about the terms of a settlement with the Soviet Union. According to many observers, even a partial settlement is impossible by definition, because the Soviet system itself is incapable of any other behavior than prolonged struggle. But this amounts to a fatalistic abdication of policy.

Our ideas are shopworn and ineffective. The Soviets are in a period of historic transition, and their empire is in crisis. We are confronted by an unparalleled opportunity, and we have no strategic response. We may be on the brink of the first military revolution since the ICBM, as space technology threatens to overwhelm superpower stability, but we seem unable to relate plans for Star Wars defense to a persuasive strategic doctrine. Arms control has collapsed; a new concept is desperately needed that relates the offense and the defense, regional and intercontinental weapons, alliance commitments and resources. Bilateral relations are vapid. East-West economic policy is a mess. And where does China fit in our Soviet policy? What is the strategic significance of the ramblings in Washington about a new manifest destiny in the Pacific? What of Afghanistan and Poland: Are they to be forgotten?

We are rapidly approaching a dead end if our biggest project is to open a consulate in Kiev. To be sure, however, Soviet policy is worse. It is sterile. Even if measured in strictly Soviet terms, it seems a strategic failure. Of course, Moscow benefits from the double standard; no one expects new ideas, or constructive contributions, from the Kremlin. But the result is Soviet immobilism,

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which only compounds the stalemate.

This is not as immediately dangerous as it might seem. Several regional wars have been fought in the past three years without a superpower confrontation. Neither the U.S.S.R. nor the United States has behaved rashly. There may well be an unwritten code of conduct that suggests the superpowers cannot go beyond certain limits. The Soviets began to violate the rules in Angola and Ethiopia, and the invasion of Afghanistan stretched American tolerance beyond the breaking point. That is the raw explanation for the current state of affairs. But reconstructing a relationship requires more than allocating blame. And even if the current situation is not so dangerous, no one can foresee the cumulative effects of a long-term deterioration.

The reader of this book is reminded of the great impact of George Kennan's long telegram from Moscow in 1946, and his "Mr. X" article in 1947. He outlined a comprehensive policy based on a strategic analysis at the right moment. Whether Kennan was right or wrong, the point is that we need something of the same order now. We need a new analysis, and an effective strategy that binds the various policy fragments into a cohesive vision of East-West relations. This book moves in the right direction, shifting our focus from the mysteries of the Kremlin to the difficulties of making our own foreign policy. Of course, in the name of full disclosure I declare my prejudice. Many of its authors are friends, and its publisher is my employer (the Council on Foreign Relations). Still, it ought to be read and thought about—even in Washington.

WILLIAM G. HYLAND

William G. Hyland is editor of *Foreign Affairs*.

STATS AND BATS

The Bill James Baseball Abstract 1984 by Bill James

(Ballantine, 273 pp., $6.95)

Bill James, who is now thirty-four years old and lives in Lawrence, Kansas, came to baseball relatively late in life, becoming a fan at the age of nine. Like many Americans of his generation, he took some time to discover his vocation. Graduating from college as an English major, he abandoned graduate studies in the mid-1970s owing to the shrinking job market, but not before acquiring literary and statistical skills which he has since turned to account. To earn a living he briefly taught high school and tended boilers, but he devoted most of his free hours—and a good many of his working ones, as well—to plumbing the statistical depths of the great American game. When James wants to know something, time is no object. He will spend days discovering whether Reggie Jackson actually hits better in front of large crowds (he generally doesn't), or whether certain pitchers are much more effective in night games than day games (they are, and by a wide margin). In 1977 he began committing his results to paper in an annual, privately published *Baseball Abstract*. By 1981 sales of the abstract were nearing one thousand a year and James had begun writing occasional magazine articles, but his economic status seems to have resembled that of Thomas Edison before he filed his first patent. Then a *Sports Illustrated* article in May 1981 introduced him to the general public.

For the past three years *The Bill James Baseball Abstract* has been a profitable item on the Ballantine Books list. James now makes frequent radio and television appearances and consults with player agents on salary arbitration cases. He is working on a book on the history of baseball and has started a newsletter. Ballantine refuses to release sales figures for the *Abstract*, but it has made local best-seller lists and the income from it has enabled James to buy a computer and hire an assistant. In the space of a few years, James has become that rarest of species: a man who can become rich and famous by doing the thing he loves best.

The *Abstract* itself begins every year with an explanation of James's basic tools: the formulas which he uses to evaluate player and team performance, of which more later. It then turns to a detailed analysis of each major league team, and ratings of each major league regular player, organized by position. It concludes with more speculative essays. In fact, however, the organization of the book is a good deal looser than this implies. James continually seizes upon opportunities to delve into esoteric realms of knowledge, showing for example how the Detroit Tigers' recent problems in finding an adequate third baseman have had parallels in the 1910s, 1920s, 1930s, and 1950s, or evaluating Red Sox phenom Wade Boggs's chances of ever hitting .400, or digressing on the actual value of stolen bases. As every hard-core baseball fan knows, dedicated fans fall into particular categories. There are those with encyclopedic memories for statistics; those who specialize in following the careers of players, especially average-to-marginal players, as they make their way around the two major leagues; those with vivid memories for the details of games which they have witnessed in person or on television; and those who specialize in the game's history. James excels in all of these categories, and in several others he has invented himself.

James's basic tool for evaluating hitters is runs created, a measure which takes into account a batter's ability to get on base and advance runners (and himself) with extra-base hits. The basic runs-created formula simply multiplies the batter's on-base percentage (hits plus walks, divided by total plate appearances) by his total bases; James's actual formula makes further adjustments for stolen bases, caught stealing, grounded into double plays, and a few other minor factors. Because the formula consistently works when applied to entire teams—that is, it gives an approximation within 5 percent of the number of runs a team actually scores in a given season—James applies it to individual players as well. A player who creates 100 runs in a season has had a fine year; 150-run seasons are extremely unusual, and the record of 233 is held by (who else?) Babe Ruth, in 1921.

How does this new measure change our appreciation of the game? Each year James presents examples to show that

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certain players with relatively high batting averages are overrated by the public because they rarely walk (low on-base percentage) and have little power (few total bases), while other hitters make up for low batting averages with high walk totals (50-100 per season) and good power. James is not impressed by players like Jerry Remy of the Red Sox, who hit a respectable .275 last year (an average inflated by Fenway Park), but had only twenty-one extra-base hits and walked just forty times. On the other hand, he ranks Joe Morgan of the Oakland A's third among twenty-six major league second basemen, largely because he walked eighty-nine times and hit with good power last year, despite his .230 average. Morgan, in fact, is probably the greatest player of our time. For more than a decade he stayed near the National League lead in on-base percentage and total bases—the two most important offensive statistics, as James often repeats—while performing very well at second base, a critical defensive position.

JAMES'S interest in players does not stop with runs created. He has devised formulas to determine their trade value, to fix their chance of reaching particular career goals (Robin Yount has a 49 percent chance of getting 3,000 hits; going into this season, Pete Rose had about a 55 percent chance of getting 4,192 and breaking Ty Cobb's record), and to measure their defensive value. James is willing to admit mistakes, and this year he has slightly modified one of his most controversial measurements—range factor, which is one of his favorite measures of defensive ability—to take account of some of the more reasonable objections to it. I might add that the new abstract also includes a previously unpublished measurement, Victory-Important RBI, which leaves me entirely cold. VI-RBI is an attempt to measure one of baseball's most famous intangibles, the ability to hit in the clutch. Unfortunately, because James does not yet have access to the data which would allow him to measure players' performance with men on base or at crucial points in the game, he has to rate the importance of RBI according to the performance of the player's team, not the player. If Jim Rice of the Red Sox hits a 3-run homer in the top of first inning, he will receive 3 VI-RBI if the Sox win the game 3-2, 1.5 VI-RBI if they win 6-2, 1 VI-RBI if they win 3-0, and

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LEON WIESELTIER

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none at all if they lose the game. In any of these four cases, however, Rice will have done exactly the same thing: homered with two on in the first inning. His VI-RBI do not seem to tell us much about his ability to produce in important situations, since they are awarded solely according to subsequent developments over which he has little or no control.

James also has discovered a simple formula which predicts how many games a team should win over the course of a season, working only with the total numbers of runs it allows and scores. This enables him to say whether a team won a larger-than-expected number of games, either because of luck or, more likely, because of good managing, or other factors which enabled it to do particularly well in close games. In fact, teams that consistently beat the formula are extremely rare; the only one to do so frequently in recent decades has been the Baltimore Orioles—one of many reasons why James regards Earl Weaver as a truly extraordinary manager. (Indeed James seems to have expected the Orioles to fall on their face after Weaver's 1982 retirement; now that they have won the world championship instead, he notes that the Giants did the same the year after John McGraw retired (1933), as did the Yankees after losing Casey Stengel (1961), and suggests that the after-effects of a great manager last as long as the core of the team he left behind him.) Managing techniques, indeed, interest James a great deal; this year's American League team analyses include a lengthy essay on each and every American League manager. The essays conclude with answers to the often embarrassing question, "If there were no professional baseball, what would this manager probably be doing?"

James generally shuns predictions, arguing that baseball is too complex for them, but to date the 1984 season is bearing out many of his expectations. He argued that the Detroit Tigers, who have performed below potential for several years, could still break loose, but that they had better hurry; the Tigers have had one of the greatest starts in baseball history. His article about the much-despised Chicago Cubs speculated that they might become a miracle team like the '69 Mets, and the Cubs are indeed fighting for first place. The San Diego Padres, he said, would be "one of the most exciting teams to watch in 1984"; despite a recent slump, they are still near the top of the N.L. West. Only the White Sox have disappointed him; James seemed to think they would easily repeat, but they are struggling to reach .500.

Well, that's baseball. The *Abstract*, like opening day, seems solidly established as an annual event, and I look forward to buying one every spring for many years to come. My one real complaint about the 1984 edition is James's decision to turn small sections of it over to his assistant, Jim Baker. Nothing against Baker—he too seems a fine student of the game, and I wish him well—but while there is room in the *Abstract* for comments and rejoinders from other critics, James owes it to his public to write the basic text. One doesn't pinch-hit for Ted Williams.

DAVID E. KAISER

David E. Kaiser teaches history at Carnegie-Mellon University.

METROPOLITAN LIFE

Hope Diamond Refuses
by Iris Owens

(Knopf, 194 pp., $13.95)

In 1973 Iris Owens wrote a hilarious and devastating book called *After Claude*. It chronicled with demonic humor the breakdown of a woman torn between a serious need for dependency on men and a crippling inability to take them seriously. We left Harriet, the heroine of that book, flipping out in the Chelsea Hotel, and waiting for a telephone call from a sleazy hippie cult member with bedroom eyes, who had promised, through total sexual and philosophical servitude, to liberate her from her peculiar dilemma.

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Eleven years have passed since then, and Owens has mellowed with age like the rest of us. Hope Diamond, the heroine of her equally hilarious but far gentler new book, has the same trapped female energy that drove Harriet crazy, but she's more phlegmatic about it, weathered enough to defuse it into a sardonic, post-hippie sophistication.

Hope, like Harriet before her, is a very funny woman who chain-smokes, eats canned tuna, shuns self-support, and is obsessed by men. She has, however, progressed from Owen's ninth level of urban female hell to, let's say, the sixth. Hope has her own apartment in a Greenwich Village brownstone, and thus has acquired independence, and with it, the inevitable by-product, a sense of choice about how life should proceed. A sense of future. Like Pavlov's dog, Hope is still waiting for a man to ring a bell to signal the start of her life, but she is clearer about it, more stylish, appreciative of fantasy and façade. While preparing for a date, she muses:

> I am aware of a breed of woman who brilliantly illumines her hospital-white bathroom in order to magnify her every flaw, but such is not my way. There's a limit to self-scrutiny, and anyway, isn't life essentially a question of lighting?

Perhaps the main difference between Hope and Harriet is that Hope has known love. She has even achieved that pinnacle of female stardom, marriage. But she has been divorced, and therefore is no longer trying, as Harriet was, to break into the business; she is looking to make a comeback. As I say, this makes for a gentler book, but in no way a less funny one.

The story is, basically, this: Hope Diamond was married in the early 1970s to one Prince Bahram of Ustan, a billionaire jetback who came to this country to go to school and let off radical steam, and who needed a green card to stay. Unable to deal with his free-love crusade, and pursuing then fashionable feminist ideals, Hope moved out of his place and into the apartment in which we find her. Her landlady, the formerly obese, now anorexic, heiress Libby Strauss, seduced Bahram and fell in love with him. Libby's best friend, the former cheerleader Joanne, then seduced Bahram away from Libby, and became pregnant by him. Bahram then divorced Hope, married Joanne, and took her home to Ustan to be his princess.

Five years have passed since Hope's dreams of princessdom were co-opted. Holed up in the basement bunker of Libby's brownstone, she has drifted into that classic urban state of otherwomanhood. She has two married boyfriends, both of whom have crazy wives and neither of whom brings her expensive presents or takes her anywhere fancy. She has no job, preferring to live on Bahram's meager ($5,000 per year) alimony and to gestate. As she explains it to a gay friend,

> Once and for all, Marshall, accept the fact that I'm not an achiever. I'm an appreciator. There has to be someone at whose feet accomplishments can be placed, and I have contributed mine.

As we meet Hope, she is waiting for Leo (the older of her two married boyfriends) to arrive at her apartment so she can break up with him. Instead, Libby drops by bearing the catalytic news that Joanne has returned from Ustan and is not in good shape. This snippet of information unleashes an old obsession in Hope's heart that drives her half way around the world before it subsides.

Iris Owens has many talents. She is one of the great humorists writing today; her turns of phrase, her rhythms, and her pinpoint timing are close to perfect. I'm amazed at the sheer number of jokes in her new book. Still Owens is more than a jokesmith. She displays a diabolically comic perspective on society and personality:

> There, skinny as the spikes of the wrought-iron gates that so enhance her property—a historical landmark, if plaques do not lie—stood my landlady Libby Strauss, revealed by more daylight than I personally prefer. . . . By the time I let her in, Libby was hyperventilating with repressed rage, as it is a canon of her current credo to transcend negativity. Libby of the sunken eyes and haughty mien is learning to love.

Owens understands the depressive paralysis that affects so many women in urban society, and she explores that lethargy by translating it into humor. But at the same time Owens departs from the classic self-putdown stance of female humor as typified by, say, Joan Rivers, or Gail Parent's *Sheila Levine Is Alive and Well and Living in New York*. Owens's heroines are not insecure. The men in their lives may condescend to them but they don't take it very personally. They chalk it up to the oblivious male ego and devote their time to seeing the humor in it. More importantly, they are able to discover full gratifica-

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tion in bed, even though it escapes them in conversation or companionship. Owens performs the rare feat of combining a blackly cynical sense of humor and a happy, normal sex life in one and the same female character. Bless her for this.

I enjoyed this book very much, but it suffers from a curious petering out at the end. Perhaps this is because the first two-thirds are so crammed full of hilarity on a cynical level that when Owens comes to describing Hope Diamond's true feelings, she seems a bit lost as to how to couch them. She can't seem to choose whether to have a sense of humor about them or a sense of anguish. She settles on a level somewhere in between, which, in light of the life-outsmarting attitude that has come before, seems oddly limp. Or perhaps this is just that Hope is not, as Harriet was, in a life-and-death struggle. Hope is in a life-and-life struggle, and such contests are not as Faulknerian.

It doesn't really matter. This is a very funny book. Owens is a wonderful humorist with a great eye for detail. She is my favorite expert on the ironies at war in brainy women who would describe themselves as bimbos in search of love.

EMILY PRAGER

Emily Prager is the author of *A Visit to the Footbinder and Other Stories* (Berkley).

TRB, *from page 6*

has been committed by any candidate, the rules call for a quick round of lying by all of them. Here too, Jerseygate followed the classic pattern. Walter Mondale, in his patented serial-monogamy style, proclaimed "I love New Jersey" and swore there's no place on earth he'd rather be. Hart asserted preposterously that all he'd really meant to complain of was having to fly across the country to meet his wife in California, rather than allowing her the pleasure of flying across the country to join him in New Jersey.

Journalists—stern enforcers of political etiquette—require politicians to tell these whoppers in order to put the campaign back on its proper course. Should a politician fail to lie at the first post-gaffe opportunity, the punishment would be headlines on the order of HART COMPOUNDS JERSEY GAFFE or MONDALE SPURNS JERSEY TOO.

So you can't blame Mondale for following the script. But you can blame him for a repeat performance the next day, when he began by saying he was "not going to press the point" regarding Hart's insufficient love of New Jersey, then repeated Hart's remark, repeated his own demand for an apology, and spent several minutes doing variations on the theme.

Mondale happened to be in New Jersey at the moment of Hart's gaffe. But Mondale is spending nearly twice as much time in California as in New Jersey in the period leading up to both state primaries. What a sacrifice! And what should we make of what Mondale told a group in San Francisco in mid-May? "I saw this beautiful morning," he said, "and for one sane moment I thought I would withdraw from the race and spend the rest of my life right here." Right here? In California? Mondale seems to be saying that if he were sane, he would never step foot in his beloved New Jersey again. I think he should apologize. Sounds like a gaffe to me.

NOTE: My column of June 4 was dictated by phone and several passages were badly garbled: "admission" for "suspicion," "demanded a charge" for "led the charge," among others too painful to repeat. Even more painful, I'm the only one who seems to have noticed. Is no one out there reading, or am I always this incoherent? The favour of no reply is requested.

THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

Following is a list of books TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion by Leo Steinberg (Pantheon/October Book). An original study of a delicate subject. (Reviewed 6/11/84)

Notes From a Child of Paradise by Alfred Corn (Viking/Penquin). A long poem about love and hope in the 1960s. (6/11/84)

New Lies For Old by Anatoliy Golitsyn (Dodd, Mead). How the Soviet Union planned to deceive the West, according to a K.G.B. defector whose inside glimpses are intriguing, even if his conclusions are questionable. (6/4/84)

War in Val D'Orcia: An Italian War Diary 1943-44 by Iris Origo (David R. Godine). One woman's day-by-day record of life in an Italy torn by war. (6/4/84)

Children in Exile: Poems 1968-1984 by James Fenton (Random House). A British poet's evocations of Germany, Cambodia, and other nightmares. (5/14/84)

The Architecture of Death: The Transformation of the Cemetery in Eighteenth-Century Paris by Richard A. Etlin (M.I.T. Press). How the urban cemetery was created and quickly overcrowded. (5/28/84)

Three Novels: The Blackmailer; A Man of Power; The Great Occasion by Isabel Colegate (Viking). Portraits of self-made men, their personal pains and social mistakes. (5/28/84)

Adieux: A Farewell to Sartre by Simone de Beauvoir (Pantheon). A portrait of Sartre in his last sad years in his own words and those of his trusted companion. (5/21/84)

The Truth That Killed by Georgi Markov (Ticknor & Fields). Inside Bulgaria: a posthumous memoir by the émigré who was killed by an umbrella. (5/14/84)

Jinnah of Pakistan by Stanley Wolpert (Oxford University Press). A major biography of the subcontinent's lesser known hero. (5/7/84)

COMING:
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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Points South and West

FRIDAY. Justice may be delayed in El Salvador, but when it comes it is swift. GUARDSMEN'S TRIAL OPENS IN SALVADOR. That was yesterday's headline. GUARDSMEN CONVICTED IN EL SALVADOR. That's today's. An open-and-shut case, literally. The four North American churchwomen, three nuns and a lay worker, were murdered on December 2, 1980—the Salvadoran right's ugly commemoration of the Carter-Reagan transition. Three-and-a-half years later, something has been done about it. Yes, the convicted soldiers are all low-ranking enlisted men; the officers and government officials who share responsibility for the crime and its aftermath have escaped punishment; the defense, according to accounts of the trial, was suspiciously feeble; the U.S. Embassy, its mind focused by an impending Congressional showdown over military aid, leaned heavily on a judicial system notoriously subject to intimidation. Nevertheless, a trial has been conducted and a verdict rendered that many people, myself included, had thought impossible. It must have taken some courage for the prosecutors, the judge, and the jurors to do what they did, even with the embassy on their side. The nuns' families evidently think so. By the way, perhaps it is time now for Jeane Kirkpatrick to apologize to those families for her sour complaint, three years ago, that the murdered women "were not just nuns," they were "also political activists." Not that this was untrue; in El Salvador as in Poland, to be an active Catholic is almost inevitably to become a political activist. The trouble with Mrs. Kirkpatrick's remark was her unmistakable implication that we should be less indignant about the murder of nuns who are political activists than about the murder of nuns who pray and teach school. In Mrs. K's mouth the term "political activist" acquired the same chilling tone of proscription that has attached to terms like "outside agitator" and "anti-party element" in other times and places. Ideology can harden the heart, as surely as sentiment can mist the eyes. The conviction of the guardsmen is no less and no more than what William Ford, a brother of one of the murdered nuns, calls it: "a good first step, but only a first step." Forty thousand have died since 1979 in El Salvador's political crime wave. These are the first indictments, let alone convictions, for any of those killings. Four down, 39,996 to go.

SATURDAY. A quick trip out West—to Santa Barbara, county seat of the Reagan ranch. It's my first visit to this town of 70,000 on the cusp between Northern and Southern California. On Monday there will be a conference at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, but for the moment there is nothing to do except—how you say in Californian?—eat lotuses. I take a stroll along the curving beach, enjoying the exotica—palm trees, a miniature freeway for bicycles, macramé sellers. The ocean is tamer than my familiar Atlantic, and greener, and you have to watch where you walk or you'll step on something unpleasant—not a stinging jellyfish, but a black globule of sludge. On the horizon are the oil rigs; they look like huge clamdiggers, bending down, pants rolled up over knobby knees. As darkness falls, on go strings of light bulbs. Now the rigs look as inviting as Edwardian amusement piers; but on the beach it's harder to see the sludge, and I step in a glob. Back at the El Escorial Hotel, I page through the Saturday *L.A. Times*, which is as fat as a Sunday anything else. My attention wanders. To hell with the world situation! I head for the tiled outdoor Jacuzzi, near the swimming pool, and slip into the hot water. My Jacuzzi-mates are a couple from up the coast. He is a landscape architect; she is a masseuse. I ask her where she plies her trade. "Have you heard of a place called the Esalen Institute?" she asks. "I've heard of it," I say. I feel immensely smug. *I'm really in California.* And it's just the way I like it—more foreign than Europe, any day.

SUNDAY. I rent a new Vespa motorbike, buy a nylon backpack, and spend the day riding through the cliffs and hills around Santa Barbara. I've never ridden a two-wheeled motorized vehicle before, and I make a pleasant discovery. Every time I stop by the side of the road—to make some notes, or to get something out of my pack—a passing motorcyclist stops and asks earnestly if I need help. Apparently there is a kind of commonwealth of the road, and even an underpowered moped is enough to get you admitted to it. I ride to a place called Hope Ranch, a serene subdivision where only millionaires live. Languid palms line the road; the houses, when they are visible at all, look large, casual, built to be comfortable rather than conspicuous; a bridle path meanders through the manicured landscape. I turn off Las Palmas Drive onto Paloma Drive, up past the bucolic Laguna Blanca School, up Estrella Drive. Looking back and down, I see an enchanted valley of patches of blue and green and gold, housetops and mist—something out of a children's book. Reagan himself lives farther inland, but Hope Ranch is Reagan country, for sure. The scene is utterly removed from any hint of poverty, injustice, or disorder. It is easy to see how, living here, one could slip gently into a deep conservative sleep. One could even imagine that all this splendor is the natural result of unfettered free enterprise—even though, as I am later told, Santa Barbara is very much a planned community. Planning is accomplished, and development held in check, by the simple expedient of carefully rationing water permits.

MONDAY. After the conference—a day of polite conversation about the tension between national security and civil liberties—we adjourn for dinner. Allen Weinstein, the historian, who is the new president of the Center for the Study of etc., puts a question. It may fall to the Center to plan one of the television debates before the California Democratic Presidential primary; what should the format be? Suggestions come from around the table, ranging from getting Johnny Carson and Ed McMahon as moderators to bringing the dropped-out candidates back for an encore as a panel of questioners. Finally, everyone agrees that the best idea would be to let the candidates run their own debate. No moderator, no set, no studio audience, no gaggle of journalists—just the three candidates, who would have to figure out among themselves how to proceed. The negotiations, and their issue, would be at least as interesting as the debate itself.

TUESDAY. The redeye east. D.C. is humid. The whole town's a Jacuzzi, which is excessive.

H.H.

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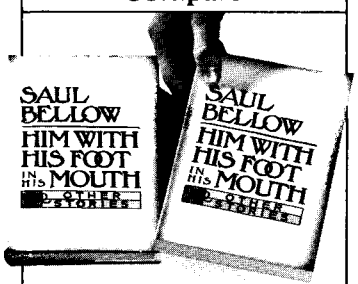

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